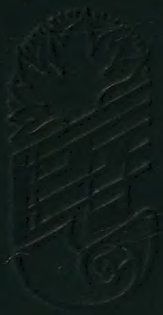

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MUSIC COME TO EARTH

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MUSIC COME TO EARTH

BY ADOLF WEISSMANN

TRANSLATED BY
ERIC BLOM

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BY ERIC BLOM
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TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

THE late Adolf Weissmann wrote this little book in 1926, *and this translation has been made from a posthumous second edition published in Germany early this year. It deserves preservation in more than one language as a fascinating and in all essentials trustworthy record of an important juncture in musical history, for Weissmann had a very real grasp of the musical situation of his time, and he was one of the few German critics who admit that the art of music is not their own country's exclusive concern, as indeed it never was, though it may have threatened to become so in the course of the nineteenth century. Already this book is a valuable historical document; in a hundred years and more musicians will look upon it as one of the most interesting sources of information on what they may perhaps regard as a period of significant upheaval, perhaps—who knows?—only as an age of freakish and barren endeavour.*

But even the best chronicler cannot encompass the whole situation in the midst of which he finds himself placed, especially when it is so complicated as the musical situation at the end of the first quarter of the twentieth century; even the most brilliant

record of contemporary events is bound to be quickly left behind by the events themselves, particularly when they move so fast as music moves to-day from one stage of development—or descent—to the next. Readers of Adolf Weissmann's book will do well to bear these two facts in mind. That he was himself aware of the latter a glance at his preliminary chapter will tell. He would clearly have been the first to admit that in four years his diagnosis of music's complaints, arrived at during a certain critical phase, was sure to grow somewhat out of date.

Many people who read "Music Come to Earth" will no doubt make their own mental revisions according to such information as they may possess. Those who have none need only remember that, to do justice to the author, some sort of reservation must be made. Let them be asked, for example, whenever they come across the word "to-day," to substitute "yesterday" for it. This will bring Weissmann more or less up to date.

Readers of this English version will probably be struck by some inaccuracies in the author's dealings with Great Britain and the United States. They may even complain that their countries receive less than justice at his hands. How far his strictures are deserved by the U.S.A. I am not able to

tell from any first-hand knowledge, but it is clear that his judgment of Britain is based partly on the traditional continental view and partly on hearsay. No musician in close touch with England could possibly have said that the Queen's Hall Promenade Concerts lead but a precarious existence under the new regimen of the B.B.C., and he would probably be of opinion that it was not so much the British National Opera Company that proved inadequate as their public. Again, what Weissmann says in passing about Elgar and Holst, not to mention the fact that he has nothing to say about other important British composers, seems to indicate that he had not thought it worth while to study our music more than superficially. As for the other arts, we are calmly and summarily expelled from the European community and lumped with America; nor is it easy to know what the author is thinking of when he says that in our exchange of music with the U.S.A. we are a decided second; it cannot be of music and artists indigenous to the two countries.

But the English-speaking nations may console themselves: Weissmann says equally hard things about others, and not least about Germany. "Music Come to Earth" has the qualities and defects of a survey made rapidly during a transition in musical

progress. Fundamentally accurate facts are thrown too much into the light or the shade by the author's endeavour to capture the whole picture of an instant. The book is a snapshot of a passing situation, not a film recording a development. A fleeting impression had to be arrested at one particular point of an extremely complex evolutionary process; the truth of things had to be caught and fixed at a moment when any apparent fact might prove a delusion; subsequent sketching in of details had to be restricted as much as possible if the momentary glimpse was to retain its actuality. Thus some of the author's assertions may now appear somewhat exaggerated, and while more than one of his prophecies looks like coming true, there is no doubt that once again his judgment needs reconsidering, that he had here and there let a hasty impression dictate too blunt a statement.

One may say all this without disloyalty to a writer who has caught one's interest; in fact it requires saying, since it bears out Weissmann's own view of the incessant changes and surprises music springs on us in its descent to earth, for in the subject of this book as well as in its treatment there is a constant reminder of the transitoriness of all things —itself included. *E. B.*

London, *July* 1930.

BY WAY OF EXPLANATION

MUSIC progresses furiously. Five years or so offer the observer such a wealth of experience that, even after a conclusive survey of the present, he becomes aware of something still more actual, of a last-minute present, that calls for his scrutiny.

Once again I feel urged to sum up my views.

We find ourselves in the midst of fundamental subversions in the domain of art, and it is music, perhaps, which plays the greatest part in them. Nothing of the kind has ever happened before.

The present state of music is here to be contemplated without any prejudice, and new perceptions are to be gained from the attempt. This, however, is possible only so long as music is not regarded as standing apart, but as strongly influenced by an increasingly powerful outside world.

Music's coming down to earth need not be its ruin; but its conformance with this new world of machinery cannot but change its very core.

Although the present book is a sequel to my analysis of the transition from romanticism to modernism, "Music in the World Crisis," it will

be immediately understood on being read independently. It is addressed to all those who desire to make up their minds about the far-reaching vicissitudes which music is undergoing all about them.

It is a statement, not an accusation.

A. W.

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II—MAN AND MACHINE

THE birth of a new humanity is not yet accomplished; it is taking place before our eyes. And what we see is this: mind devised the machine; now the machine fetters and drives mind.

The nineteenth century had made men of sensibility the rulers of the whole domain of the intellect. Richard Wagner, at the summit of romanticism, had broken people's will-power, or rather completed the breaking of their will-power, by refining their senses. But his romanticism was at the same time accepted as the robust and active expression of German patriotism, and so did not prevent the military spirit from manifesting itself. The war thus came to confront a race divided into two opposite halves, especially in Germany. It was only too natural that one party should wish to know nothing of politics, world economics and the like, while the other spoiled everything with its ridiculous obstinacy and lack of psychological insight. In the last resort there is no better psychologist than the artist, for whom it had, however, become impossible to

influence his non-artistic contemporaries to any degree.

Germany was at that time regarded as the land of music. Every other German had to become a musician; at least, he was sent to a musical academy or to some private teacher who was supposed to know his business. As a rule he did not know it, for he too had been destined from childhood to learn music under ineffectual guidance. If he did happen to know it, he generally became a cultivator of the superfluous.

The young German's aptitude for music seemed to be taken for granted, so that there was never any call to prove it. We need not question the Germans' love of music, which was, and still is, acknowledged the world over, even though it may exhibit itself in many and often very dubious ways. If sentimentality can become fruitful in any way, it is doubtless most eagerly made so among the German middle class; but in every country the middle class is prone to it. For, however much the world may be subject to the law of progress, most human beings have an astonishing capacity for standing still. Sentimentality is one of their forces of habit. It is true that in the Germanic countries, as else-

where, folksong was long ago displaced by musical comedy; but this too is soaked in sentimentality, which is sustained by reluctance to think—an evil common to all mankind.

All this, to be sure, would not have been enough to produce so extraordinary a predilection for the cultivation of music in Germany, had it not been for the piano, which became one of the principal means of expression for those who had small intellectual gifts but great love of music. Let us not renew the old complaints against the so-called instrument of torture, since they are now silent; what concerns us is merely to determine what that instrument did to benefit or to impair the music of past generations.

Here was a mechanism that seemed to yield its secrets with comparative readiness even to the indifferently gifted. It was capable of reproducing things heard or written down in musical notation. A whole treasury of music was thus made accessible to the player.

In reality the piano was a machine. The very fact that it did not deny its services to the less musical showed that. So did its manner of tone-production. But the performer's ambition to inspirit this machine was all the greater for

the obstacles it put into the way of the fingers' capacity to grip and the hand's span. In spite of these, an average technique could be acquired by many players who had no vocation, just as a certain talent for drawing may be developed by those to whom access to the graphic arts is otherwise denied. It is true that the piano became the toy of countless women who transferred the chatter of their tongues to the clatter of the keys; but it is no less true that a whole section of humanity was intent on becoming in some way creative with the aid of this instrument and endeavoured to pour its whole heart into pianistic sound.

But the keyed machinery, which was waiting for man to deliver it from its mechanism, was ready to yield to still greater exploitation. The fancy of the exceptionally gifted exercised itself upon, indulged in and took fire from, the manipulation of the keys. No doubt composition at the piano is an inferior kind of musical creation, and therefore cannot of itself lead to great ends; yet what Hans von Bülow, who knew very well what he was talking about, called "pianistic convulsions" pointed the way towards far-off possibilities. No less a musician than Chopin drew the essential nutriment for his magic

art from the keyboard. There the machine was endowed with a soul and made eloquent by a unique personality. Even scales and figurations began to quiver with excitement. The finger-tip acquired motive power, the pedal provided new colour. For the first time the keyed machinery was redeemed, and that without retaining any disturbing earthly remains.

A whole world was led to music, or imagined itself led to music, by a mechanism thus delivered and made eloquent; all musical culture seemed to have proceeded from the domain of the keyboard and to point back to it. Such was a bygone age. The human voice was necessarily underestimated and subordinated as the advocate of the corporeal, the sexual. Spirit and soul, urged to their highest efforts by the piano, transferred themselves to the orchestra. The voice, opposed by nature to all that is mechanical, could not maintain itself against an orchestra suffused with feeling and endowed with nerves. It had its sphere in Italian opera, which, however, was not regarded as wholly serious because it satisfied only the instincts.

Musical culture all over the world, so long as it was dominated by the piano, had its grievous weaknesses, and these were particularly notice-

able in Germany. It is indisputable that nowhere else so great a musical traffic, based on the tradition of a widespread musical cultivation, organized itself; but at the same time numberless schools of music bred a dilettantism which not only appeared to menace the art itself, but was bound to become economically hazardous at a less favourable time. A sterile musical parasitism was bred, transmitted, multiplied. The division between a creative dilettantism and professionalism became indistinct. Paradoxical as it may sound, the love of music did harm to its craft, did harm to music itself. A race of dabblers was in sight, thriving in the shade still, but threatening to come out into the light. This danger was much smaller in other countries where music was not regarded as essential to the point of exclusiveness; but in Germany it was fostered as a necessary luxury. This brought all foreigners who took up music as a profession to the great German musical centres, particularly to Berlin.

The unromantic times we now live in had already begun before the war that completed the disenchantment. Aircraft proclaimed the victory of the machine. It conquered mankind and became the unsuspected ruler of the world.

It is the greatest symbol of that up-to-dateness which sways and drives the newspapers. Machines that bridge distances in a short and ever shorter time are naturally the enemies of romanticism, which has its very being in remoteness—so much so that it creates it artificially. True, romanticism withstood the invention of the railways, but it received a first perceptible shock from the transport and international commerce they inaugurated. They made the artist's splendid isolation a rare thing. He might pose before the middle classes as a Bohemian, as a phenomenon, and increase his fame by startling them ; but his work was endangered by the traffic. His peril was mannerism, that peculiarity of the small artist. Once the continents are linked up, once America or another overseas country may be reached by us in a day or two, the levelling of our planet must necessarily continue, and this is as a matter of course inimical to romanticism, which demands secrecy. Once machinery has penetrated into every corner of the world, romanticism is bound to die out.

The actual necessitates the practical, and that in turn the actual again. The creation of lasting values is not aimed at. Mechanism and economics teach the artist to regard the idea of immortality

as nonsense. If he casts a glance back into a past that shows him artists with ideals who starved for the sake of posthumous fame, he will tell himself that few have had their dreams fulfilled. "How many works of art are extinct, how few live on! Let us be practical," he will say. "To be practical is to take heed of commerce. Commerce is the expression of the present day. Let us paint or compose in such a manner that our works will be exhibited or performed."

When the arrival of an airman from America is announced, the newspapers are concerned with nothing but reports of him, and of every incident of his daring flight. The artist, however up-to-date he may endeavour to be, cannot but envy the airman, for he will never be able to stir the masses to anything like the same excitement.

As if the effects of the war were not enough, there came psycho-analysis. The former explain the sovereignty of the machine, the latter does everything to make us conscious of processes which had so far lain dormant in the sub-conscious. Here again romanticism is opposed. To dream, which is to fertilize the germs of creation, becomes more difficult. The often

false, and in many ways dangerous, interpretations of psycho-analysis attack the very roots of artistic production. For the consciousness which allied itself to the subconscious in order to direct it towards a work of art was different from that reached by psycho-analytical methods, which serves matter-of-fact perceptions. That which is intended for a remedy must of necessity show itself as a peril to all that is creative. And it is only too natural that the psycho-analyst who leaves his own domain and encroaches upon that of art should wish to deny, for example, the difference between the musical and the unmusical. He finds aptitude for musical expression everywhere, though frequently repressed, and professes an ability to win all the world over to the practice of music by the mere removal of the repressions. Psycho-analysis as current coin conspires with wrongly understood democracy against art.

With the victory of the airplane, which has already outdone the still prevailing motor-car, the musician finds himself confronted by a new and portentous fact. Compared with all those others which have been making music and will continue to make music, it is the super-machine.

At the piano, man, as musician, still wrestled

with the machine. He could once dominate it by giving it a soul. Now the machine is ready to subdue him.

The piano, deprived of its soul, converted into an instrument of percussion, proves that music has come down to earth.

III—SPORT VERSUS MUSIC

MAN, in claiming his lordship over the machine, feels compelled to match it in absolute exactitude and reliability, and so must himself become mechanized. But a man of keen sensations cannot achieve that. Thus the musician of the nineteenth century was least capable of growing up into an age of mechanism. The Dionysiac side of him, the true or pretended root of his creativeness, knew but morbid elevation that was like a refuge from his own lack of will-power. He contemplated himself, dug deep down into himself, tried to set himself to music. This was enough to break his already enfeebled will. It did not exclude hard, bitter and successful contests with the instrument, the machine he desired to make articulate, but it inevitably led to open dissension between body and soul, between body and senses.

The war accelerated a reaction against excessive cultivation of sensibility, and though militarism was officially execrated, it was secretly loved and fostered. Where it dared no longer show itself openly, it took on other forms.

The dethronement of mind and sensibility is to be completed through the agency of sport. People are devoted to Müller or Mensendieck or some other form of methodical gymnastics, while at the other extreme of bodily training we find boxing, which resembles the bull-fight rather than true sport, but finds a new and growing public. Instincts of cruelty as well as sentimentality find their satisfaction at the sight of it. The cry for *panem et circenses* is as insistent to-day as when it was first uttered. The craze for amusement has grown immeasurably, brains are at a discount, the masses have been reshuffled, and the young generation of to-day has no greater ambition than to live thoroughly. At such a time the boxing match appears doubly enticing and convincing.

The fact that sport is becoming almighty, that the sporting section in the newspapers grows larger and larger, throws its light on the turning-point of art, or of anti-art, at which we find ourselves.

The painter and the sculptor will begin by welcoming this exaltation of physical culture, since artistic delight in the form of the human body may express itself through the pencil, the brush or the chisel. The nude gains in

attractiveness. Whole pictorial portfolios have been devoted to the boxer. The athlete appeals to the plastic artist, although there are painters and sculptors who for metaphysical reasons, or because of some preoccupation with modern stylistic art, have no use for the well-developed body, and others who for the sake of spiritual expression like to depict contortions and irregularities.

Again and again the artist may be seen to assume an attitude of doubt towards sport. Much depends, to be sure, on what we understand by sport; but what is hardly to be doubted is that in the community of artists it is the musician who will be most ready to regard it as his enemy.

We have reached a point at which the Anglo-Saxon ideal of intensive, almost exclusive, physical culture is about to become that of other nations. For the whole movement in favour of sport, in whatever different shades it may manifest itself, originated in England and America—that is, in those countries where life predominates over art, where a systematically desensualized atmosphere conspires with climatic influences in hindering artistic production.

The musician, whether creatively or executively occupied, was ever conspicuous by his

neglect of the body. A disharmonious frame strives to bring forth harmony. A consequence of physical disharmony is a heightened susceptibility, which in the nineteenth century led to the most precious utterances of romanticism. It is in Mozart that the ominous invasion of the irrational into the domain of the physical may be first observed. In the craftsmanlike art which progressed up to the time of Bach the contradiction between body and mind is not yet noticeable. The round faces of early eighteenth-century musicians are reassuring to look at: they make us feel that these men were not yet aware of any struggle for originality, of any painful pursuing and wrestling, of any violent conflict between their environment and their dream visions. It is true that one must bear in mind such contradictory figures as the Renaissance musician Gesualdo, Prince of Venosa, and remember that the Renaissance as a whole had its subtleties. One may even go on trying to allay hostility to sport by referring to the supposedly athletic Leonardo da Vinci, the universal genius in whom body and mind are said to have existed side by side in perfect agreement. For all that it need hardly be proved that all these artists of the Renaissance knew

nothing of the nervous excitability of a later period—the nineteenth century. And how little was the assiduity of those contrapuntists of the eighteenth disturbed by what later came to be understood by nervous excitement. Their sturdiness was at one with their fleshliness. The body may have been neglected, but it is only in Mozart that sensitiveness begins to show itself at the expense of physical well-being. Then came, in rapid succession, Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann, Mendelssohn, Weber and Chopin as witnesses for a progressive refinement of the senses.

All the music of the nineteenth century was nervous music. It postulated a disturbance in the balance between body and mind and showed a gradual relaxation of rhythm. It is true that here we come upon the vigorous figure of Verdi, whose nature does not seem to square with that of the nineteenth century in general. He was a self-confessed peasant who took to agriculture, and even became inventive on its behalf. What occupied him on his property of Sant' Agata was mostly recreation from music, not its pursuit. No doubt even Verdi cannot have been so entirely without nerves; but, however sensitive they may have been, they could not dominate his will. Both, will and sensibility, thus celebrated

their victory in a development that continued down to the old age of the master who was an exceptional phenomenon of the closing nineteenth century, and remains the great finale of operatic Italianism, the coda of which is Puccini.

We know of a Wagner who wandered into the high mountains, and of another who turned somersaults to let his mind unbend. And it is this faculty of unbending which sport too seems at first sight to offer the musician. But does not the instrumental player, who practises physically for hours without particularly exerting his mind, also engage in a kind of bodily sport? Was not a Gustav Mahler, according to his own confession, obliged to conduct in order to find relaxation from creative high tension? The ability to unbend is there, but it is nullified by the continuous collaboration of hearing and senses, and this again creates tension.

True sport is that of the open-air, which cannot be exercised systematically either by the creative or the executive artist, and that frequently for other reasons than mere lack of time.

Sport aims at hardening will-power by heightening vitality and agility. Music tends to break will-power. Sport, by steeling it, robs music, or tries to rob it, of that vibration, that feeling

of suspension and quivering agitation which breeds the sensitiveness that is indispensable to a work of art.

Sport seeks to desensualize, and in fact does so by means of the relaxation it produces. The contest against eroticism in sport also becomes a contest against art.

The Germany of the immediate past, which after all gave birth to Jahn, the father of gymnastics, seemed to suffer from a militarism that was inimical to art. Sport in those days was a kind of luxury, an exceptional pursuit for a minority. To-day, however, the pendulum swings to the opposite side. Sport is now to replace that physical culture which was then achieved by military training, and to some extent by gymnastics. At a time when all classes of the people play general post, it has spread far and become common property of the whole populace, which it is to make healthier, fitter, ripe for the age of machinery. And women, once excluded from this means of acquiring fitness, now avail themselves of it eagerly, not to say feverishly. As they drive their car to-day, so they will steer their airplane to-morrow. A new ideal of beauty proves mightier than all that opposes it.

It is through this deviation of woman into a sporting type that the change becomes decisive, for it was upon her that the maintenance of music as an executive art depended. The sensuous current she establishes between the rostrum or the stage and the auditorium has long proved her power. Dilettantism may often have scored a victory in this way, but a sensational effect was produced by the woman who made and communicated her impression without restraint. The preference of physical culture by the average woman must of necessity weaken this current in public musical performances. Moreover, a female singer's tone generally proceeds from a well-rounded body: sound and flesh thus somehow stand in a natural relation to each other.

It is useless to revolt against these inevitable events, and the truth is that art is not yet overthrown by its loss of romanticism. But there is no doubt that the new psychic changes, especially those in women, make the artist run the risk of loneliness. Where is he to take refuge with his fancy? He cannot but endeavour to adjust his work to the universal attitude of mind.

According to Karl Bücher, folksong is in its

origin the song of the labourer: it is a vicious circle. But the more originally and spiritually music develops, the farther civilization progresses, the sooner will a point be reached at which the human body, once the dictator of rhythm, turns against art. The machine has disfranchised the manual labourer, for whom folksong was a matter of course. Now man himself desires to become mechanical and, knowing nothing of those origins of folksong, looks for a new kind of self-expression.

The primitiveness of modern dancing appears to confirm this tendency. The foxtrot, in the form of jazz, strives, it seems, to set sport to music. Even the retarding syncopation is no proof of broken will-power. Will remains strong, opposes all that is romantic and subjugates all the valuable earlier music, the melodic element of which it disregards, in order to tie it down to its own rhythm.

Dancing as a sport is with us, for it is a fact that, as soon as it is possible for human beings to dance cold-bloodedly in the crude light of day, a recreation which after all was once an expression of excitement must become a form of sport. It is unthinkable for the waltz to claim any victims during the morning hours.

The wooing persuasion that is characteristic of it could only become operative with heightened sensuous and nervous excitement. It lived in the heated ballrooms at the Sperl in Vienna, enticing and coaxing. The urging power exercised by its music could be judged from the very look the dancer cast on his partner. The three-four motion, classical in its origin, had a hovering, floating character. It did not aggressively make for its goal, but reached it through a crescendo of poise.

Of jazz one is inclined to think that it embodies by nature the highest degree of sensuality. For is it not exotic in its origin? Is it not born of a desire for orgiastic displays? Coloured slaves here force from their American oppressors a motive outburst of the wildest, most primitive instincts and the confession that all mankind is equal before the primordial force of jazz.

But what the coloured people of the Southern States imparted to jazz, not without an achievement in improvisation in the form of rhythmic labourers' song—that is to say, a piece of nature—is at once caught in the clutches of a civilization which, being American, exercises its seigniorial right. Jazz, purged of its primitive nature, corresponds, though in a somewhat tamed form, to the

tempo of our time. The crescendo of an earlier period, however, it does not know: its allurement lies elsewhere—in the quality of its sound. With an almost gymnastic regularity it marches on and on for ever at the same pace. It is, needless to say, not out of the question that here too the dancer's power of persuasion may influence his partner. That is a matter of personality, of the dancers' individual disposition. According to their varying emotional peculiarities the force of aggression in the foxtrot may be intensified. Yet how often the onlooker is surprised by the indifferent, almost businesslike look with which the dancer glances past his partner!

Rhythm, which is the expression of the will, is regarded as the fertilizing element in music. But here it has first of all become a danger. It has the advantage of easy intelligibility. Wind and percussion, with the equivocal saxophone, serve it slavishly. It is the short cut for the unmusical, who suddenly find themselves able to dance, to give vent to sensuous energies, which may, however, easily degenerate into mere physical activity. Charleston, Black Bottom or whatever it may be, it is all the same, only a little more or less primitive. The lyric intermezzo of the Blues is agreeable, but not in

sufficiently sharp contrast to that which rings out shrilly, inconsiderately and energetically as a kind of mechanized and disinfected orgy. It is quite logical that much dancing should take place in the open nowadays. The sport of dancing as an open-air amusement is one of the healthiest pursuits for people of the present day who are anxious to give still further relaxation to minds already relieved of the burden of thought. The machine has a musical success to record.

IV—THE NEW TONAL EXPERIENCE

SPORT, which endeavours to mechanize the orgy of the dance, begins to influence musical sound. Hardness and precision, exacted by rhythm, cannot but modify the effect of the instrumental organization. The masculine comes into the foreground and tenderness recedes into the shade. An orchestral chamber music of unsuspected diversity in colour makes its appearance; unsuspected because the spirit of sport, which requires exactitude, incites the wind players to virtuosity just as it induces every muscle of the human body to become more agile, flexible and reliable. The fact is that the jazz player too grows into an acrobat, whose whole body takes part in the astonishing feats he performs with his lips and hands. Musical execution of this sort may rise to a Dionysiacal frenzy.

Yes, the orchestral wind player, especially the trumpeter and trombonist, who in Germany more than elsewhere regarded his mastery as fully adequate to present requirements, suddenly felt displaced by the supremely accomplished jazz players. He sees them produce, without

noticeable change of facial expression, without the distortion of the features he had always regarded as inevitable, a vibrato or a glissando such as he had never dreamt of before. More than that, these people actually manage to play several instruments in succession with scarcely a break, and thus to enrich the orchestral colour by more than one individual contribution. Inflated cheeks have almost disappeared. To the full instrumental tone several degrees of muted sound have been added. In the domain of the saxophone particularly, new experiences obtrude themselves. Covering the soprano, alto, tenor and barytone registers, it comes forward as the most conspicuous novelty in the production of melody. To it is added the banjo, with which the Anglo-Saxons are familiar as a plucked accompanying instrument, while the piano serves to maintain the rhythm and to fill up the volume of sound. The piano has really grown into a machine in so far as it underlines the pounding gait of jazz in the bass, but it leaves the player's right hand enough scope for fantastic embroideries and for the development of a dexterity that would do credit to any concert performer.

It is interesting to see how contrapuntal combinations, harmonic surprises and multiform

variations are accomplished in the manner of quick-witted improvisation. But improvisation is harnessed to the inexorable rhythm in which banjo and percussion collaborate frantically and mechanically. And when the human voice is drawn in to let the " Song " justify its title, it is no more than a component in this jazz band, from which emanates an unrestrained sportive exhilaration.

The string players, it is clear, lead but a modest existence in this taut instrumental body. They had been used to melodic leadership, but are now constrained to see their position unsettled by the wind players' increased virtuosity. For the woodwind instruments too, particularly the clarinet, have learnt to heighten the allurement of the total effect of sound.

This effect, it is true, is wholly new in character. An element that stands halfway between music and noise somehow plays a part. Thanks to its inherent mobility and tension, the jazz band, which on the average contains no more than a dozen players, sounds louder than any other music produced by so few executants.

It has given us a new tonal experience. The significant thing is that the sensuality which proceeded from the strings is now driven away or at least checked. The emphasis on weak

beats at the expense of strong ones, which is characteristic of syncopation, retards the incessant motion, though only in order to urge it on the more unconstrainedly; but it is ever dominated by the discipline of the thumping machine, which seems to set a dam against the flow of eroticism.

The transformation of the orchestra becomes clear when we compare the jazz band with the orchestra of a romantic naturalist like Richard Strauss. He too is acquainted with mirth, he too made the woodwind express jest and satire, though of course not without deeper significance. The whole of "Till Eulenspiegel" and the episode of the enemies in "Ein Heldenleben" are, though surely not uninfluenced by Berlioz, surprising innovations that have an unfailing effect on the public's ear. Audiences even used to join in the hilarity. All the same, they would have revolted against being fed exclusively on that kind of music. Happily for the ordinary hearer, these conspicuous passages were after all incidents, compensated for by the sentimentality of the melodic line and the luxuriant euphony by which they were surrounded. That euphony was possible because Wagner's mock-polyphony was developed by Strauss to a far greater extent. No amount of naturalism, however much it

might make the resources of the orchestra serve so-called ugliness, was capable of dispelling this fundamental atmosphere.

What was incidental here is raised to the function of an actual substance in jazz, which comes from other zones, and this is done with wholly new and deliberately weighed means. The romantic sound of the strings exists no longer; it may at most render service to the lyric Blues and the Tango exported by the Argentine. The saxophone as melodic leader, on the other hand, the exploitation of which throughout all the registers is so remarkable, has its decisive influence on the total sound. For it has an ambiguity which no other leading instrument possesses. It creates not only sound, but admixtures of sound. It does not produce pure melody, but something like a glossary to melody. It is maudlin and yet seems to be amused at its own sentimentality. It shares comic effects with the trumpet, but still claims to occupy the highest rank alone. Wavering between mawkishness, mirth and self-derision, it characterizes the jazz combination as a whole. For however much the manipulator of the percussion may seem to force the sound into noise at the kettledrums and the side drum, we are constantly

reminded that he remains subservient to a melody that is everywhere plucked to pieces and yet held together by the saxophone.

But the ear is aided by the eye, which is indispensable to the effect, to the tonal experience. Although the percussionist is not actually master, he reminds us by his whole attitude, by the grotesque playfulness with which he throws his drumsticks about and catches them, by the grimaces with which he tries to attract the hearer's attention, of the primitiveness of jazz. The negro acrobat and variety artist may now be replaced by the civilized European, but the latter too strives to appear high-spirited, negro-like and unsophisticated. He is helped in his endeavour by the spirit of the revue.

The jazz player now sees all the dancing world move to his measure. He notes that the new tonal experience gradually loses its effect and sinks to the level of the obvious; he feels that Eros, who knows no gulf he cannot bridge, has submitted to the order of the two-four bar. All he can do now is to keep measuredly merry. American jazz bands and a few good European ones may yet defy the new civilization: there is no denying that it manifests itself through sport and machinery.

V—THE DECAY OF TRISTANESQUE EROTICISM

WE must now measure the distance between the transports of "Tristan" and the mirth of jazz. The attempt of a comparison between the two may appear preposterous; yet they live in one and the same world, a world which is beginning to wean itself of the soft, swelling and infinitely graduated string tone that carries Wagner's work. That most immense of musical experiences is losing its spell because it is hard pressed by a new and much ruder one. A transvaluation of tonal values had to take place because the romantic orchestra with its mollified rhythm had reached its summit and was incapable of any further intensification.

The machine turns against "Tristan."

For some fifty years the miracle of "Tristan" was potent. Its radiations reach down to the present day. The wonder is recognized and admired, regarded as a peak in music. All know that love never before found such expression. Thus there were many people throughout all these decades who did not miss a single performance of "Tristan" in the opera house of

their town. The middle classes found in it the happiness of seeing their own longings transformed into masterful, eventful sound.

The Tristanesque longing is that produced by separation from the beloved. Poetry and metaphysics combine to serve the amorous emotions of ordinary people, increase the distance between subject and object, and remove what is in its essence a simple animal process into a transfiguring light and a radiant altitude. There is no doubt that it is the musician who has reached the topmost rung of eroticism. Music in itself is intimately bound up with the instincts; sound in itself is profoundly stirring: how much more overpowering must they be when consciousness aids them to heighten and poeticize the ecstasy of love with artificial means, and with the constant assistance of thought. In that respect "Tristan" truly has no equal. It so enlarged the distance between lover and beloved, expended so much art and artifice on this task, that the act of love itself was deferred, veiled, carried as it were into endless space.

If we observe the poet-composer's psychic condition, we find this: Wagner, as everyone knows, indulged his sexual instincts freely and

diversely; but there was a higher and unfulfilled eroticism as well, which he not only obeyed in life, but also deflected consciously and economically upon his work and made fruitful for his art. The repressions imposed upon him by Mathilde Wesendonck's cold nature became a blessing for "Tristan." What he was obliged to curb flowed into a work of art. Wagner felt and knew this well. Methodical collaboration of the unconscious and the conscious in artistic creation probably offers itself nowhere to our admiration as it does here.

Let us turn awhile to others who expressed love in music about the same time. There we find, a little earlier, middle-class sentiment in Verdi's "Traviata," a much simpler love converted into music that is not without spurious emotionalism, and much-agitated passion in Bizet's "Carmen," where it is distilled into the barest, clearest and most finished forms, according to the French manner. To this one must add, to be sure, that sentimentality of Gounod's brand thrives here too, for Micaela, contrary to Prosper Mérimée, appears as a purely operatic figure. Between "Tristan" and these two operas lies a chasm. The German middle class, with its education, its hankering after the meta-

physical, its sultry longings, is worlds removed from that of both Latin countries.

The way in which Wagner achieved this increase of the distance between lover and beloved by means of music might well be guessed from the harmonic conditions of his century; but in the last resort, however much stress we may lay on the influence of Liszt, it is only to be explained by his instincts, which in his impetuosity he satisfied often enough, yet for that very reason possessed the faculty of exploiting consciously. Nowhere else than in Wagner, nowhere else, again, than in "Tristan," do we find the same parallelism between body and music expressed. The physiological process of panting, of irrepressible yet deliberately restrained yearning, gave birth to the expressive sequence: while ecstasy endeavours to elevate the sensual into the supersensual, the music constantly recalls the physical. But next to the rallentando and the pause, next to the tension produced by accidentals, it was the suspension that proved decisive. Expressing itself within the space of two bars at the very opening it systematically fertilizes the whole work. The resolution, longer and longer deferred, more and more intensified, assumes a compelling power. A clear, taut rhythm would imperatively exact

a speedy resolution; a softened rhythm withholds it and so intensifies an expression of desire.

For decades, then, the Tristanesque expression of love, concentrated in the suspension, dominated the world. It wrought a change in the prima donna, too. Having previously given free rein to impulse, Isolde turned her into a pathetic heroine in whom eroticism exhibited itself repressed and veiled.

In our practical age "Tristan" begins to be a petrified miracle. Women who devote themselves to sport, whose moral life approximates more and more closely to that of the men whose rights they claim, will not find it easy to attain the psychic disposition to make them receptive for a work like "Tristan." More closely in contact with life and its troubles than hitherto, they decline to wrap up the act of love in philosophical circumlocutions. Nudity has become natural and that criterion of beauty, the leg, is constantly visible. At play and in dancing it attracts attention. Even eroticism grows mechanical; the sexual act has scarcely more significance than eating and drinking. Even the unnatural, the degeneration of the instincts, is taken for granted. There can be no cause for

yearning where all is fulfilment. The distance between man and woman as sexual beings has been reduced to the minimum.

Thus the occasion for a musical expression of love disappears, its charm vanishes. If only for that reason, music no longer has room for love. A composer of to-day who forces erotic dreams into some half-baked piece of art and supplies a spurious neo-romantic work painted in nebulous colours may for a while please a middle-class public that regards art from his own point of view. Thus the artist may keep his distance by the pretext that all supposedly valuable music veils its meaning. And since jazz makes an everyday occurrence of bodily contact, while musical comedy no longer gets along without jazz, the tastes of the plain man are catered for in every way.

The solemnity of love, as it was glorified by musicians, glorified in "Tristan," is dealt its death-blow by psycho-analysis. That science, in relating nearly all psychic processes in the domain of the subconscious to sex and making the latter the pretended source of every psychic disturbance, thus discarding every cloak of modesty, not only shakes the already tottering institution of marriage in its foundations, but makes the

relationship of two lovers so explicit that its artistic expression cannot fail to be affected.

If we regard the work of art as a means of making sensuality fertile in a higher sense, of sublimating instinct, then it must of necessity be forced into an increasingly narrow circle of activity, since the occasion to transvaluate instinct into art is fast disappearing.

One thing is certain. The suspension, with all that belongs to it in the way of musical symbols of yearning, is done with. The new objectivity, as they call it, on the other hand, has no desire to deal with questions of love artistically. Progressions in fourths and clashes of seconds announce sexual indifference. The merrily aggressive jazz may be regarded as something like the new frankness of expression in erotic matters. But jazz is equivocal, and moreover it wears badly. It grows more mechanical than its own aims can ever become.

Everyday things have penetrated into music, which wants to come to terms with life and find in it the incentive for new expression and new forms.

VI—THE VICTORY OF THE HABITUAL: RADIO AND FILM

A MIRACLE, the invention of transmission by wireless and film, comes, not quite accidentally, to the aid of a humanity that approximates to the mechanical. Not quite accidentally, for mind and imagination, which reduce spatial distances, making them shrink to a minimum, must needs endeavour to devise an apparatus to put man into touch with things of the spirit and the senses, or rather to let the average person grasp them without trouble. The positive aspect of the situation is a decisive victory for immediacy. But there is another side to it that calls for observation: art, once the product of skill and struggle in the creator, of active collaboration with him on the part of the listener and spectator, is now offered as the world's ambrosia to those moderately endowed with intellect, and so of necessity becomes detrimental to creation.

That the man in the street demands and enforces relief from all cerebration and is helped in this by men who work laboriously and imaginatively is not to be wondered at;

it is to be regarded as inevitable. Eye and ear demand directness of impression. Which of the two organs requires more is not easy to determine, but the need of relaxation is clearly evident.

The pianola and the gramophone, each in its own way, try to reflect living sound. The pianola makes an effort to fix the pianist's personality in its rolls. The man with imagination but without technique flatters himself that he has gained new ground by this means. It is significant that it is precisely the piano, and next to it the harmonium and the organ, which have submitted to this fate. At its very birth it was predicted that the piano would have to face the greatest artistic trials—a virgin for whom anything might be in store. The highest creative achievement and the lowest form of counterfeit are within the range of the keyboard. Again and again the desire shows itself to separate machine and personality, to debase the instrument to a real mechanism. For all that, the pianola can, at any rate for the present, deliver home music from its clumsiest dilettantism. For the roll goes so far as to reproduce personal dynamic expression. The impress of a great pianistic feat is indelibly recorded in the symbolic web of lines, holes and slits.

The gramophone wants to achieve more, and actually does so. With greater versatility it draws more and more music, more and more instruments into its circle. The hearer yearns to capture the charm of the human voice, that of a great tenor like Caruso, let us say. Everyone knows how quickly the apparatus, not without the aid of hard cash in ever-increasing amounts, captured even the most far-famed singers and the noblest vocal tone. On the whole the miracle was beneficial, for although the machine may have caught and frozen living sound, the advantage remains that masses of people who were once exclusively devoted to soulless piano playing have now taken to the sound of the human voice. It is true that this is counterbalanced by a grievous remnant of the infancy of the gramophone, dating from the time of the phonograph:—accompaniments on the level of the barrel organ, which do their best to nullify the positive advance in the reproduction of the solo voice. Nevertheless, the gramophone has not only a past, but already a present and a future. The capacity of the disc for taking the refinements and subtleties of the voice increases. It is the sound of the piano that resists its conquest most energetically, which is apparently the machine's revenge on the

machine, but in reality a consequence of the lack of overtones that dulls the sound. There jazz comes to the aid of the gramophone record. Itself a form of mechanized music, divested of all that is emotional and romantic, it seems to have been waiting for the apparatus that is able to serve it and to secure it the greatest publicity. Dance records reach the greatest possible perfection of reproduction, especially those coming from America, which are accommodated to a wholly mechanical performance. They are a perfect substitute for a jazz band. And the alliance of a mechanical achievement with a mechanical and sport-like practice of dancing strikes one as by no means unnatural. We rejoice to note how effectively the disc renders a small number of solo players, each of whom contributes his own characteristic part to the total sound or noise; how a kind of counterpoint, though of the most primitive order, becomes petrified there; how squeakings and groanings and whistlings come through no less successfully than the grotesque sentimentality of the saxophone: it is the triumph of the despiritualization, the mechanization of music.

But the record grows more exacting. It aims at appropriating choral and orchestral works

of lasting value. It tries to mirror Beethoven, Wagner, Richard Strauss or Stravinsky as nearly like the original as possible. Its ambition has grown, while the radio threatens immeasurable possibilities and takes upon itself to set between living and frozen sound a compromise that seems capable of endless development.

In the meantime, however, the victory of the immediate has long consolidated itself in another way. The eye, as well as the need of relaxation, is satisfied in the fullest measure by the film. Man's sight is as insatiable as his craving for sensation, which overlooks all defects of psychology and calls forth the unrestrained expression of primitive inward emotions. The spectator laughs and weeps with his film star, feels her pretended tragedy with her and is swayed by gestures calculated to work upon the eye, upon the senses. The film star, who has gained the eye of the masses, grows into the greatest celebrity of the present day. The film itself may pass, but her fame lasts somewhat longer.

But however much the kinetic energy of the film and the rapidity of its pictorial changes may be calculated to create tension and may incessantly and obtrusively address the eye, however much the spectator's curiosity may be satisfied, his

avidity for music remains. Silence during continuous movement on the screen worries him, for it seems to him unnatural. That is why in every country in the world, not only in Germany, where music is the most common article of utility, the film demands a musical accompaniment. But what sort of accompaniment ? Here are possibilities of consumption such as the past never dreamt of. The kinema devours vast quantities of valuable music. It is a mechanism, but it aims at creating excitement ; it demands full attention for itself, yet asks music to support it in the production of that excitement. Music cannot vie with the film in swiftness. Even in opera it has some difficulty in keeping pace with the acting without damage to itself where the libretto lets events follow quickly one upon the other. It lives in another domain, for it makes its appeal again and again to the sensitive human being. That hinders it in its motion. By its rhythm alone is it connected with reality, though its dynamics may help to make the union closer. But now, owing to a regrettable error, it is asked to engage in a race with a rapid succession of pictures. To enlist new creative forces in its service would be a waste of effort. Special compositions for films have already been written

and are still written, and they are generally of a kind to make one condemn the practice; in general, however, the film is content with searching the treasure-house piled with music produced by creative efforts of the past for something to match its situations. The sublimest work is not safe from being used, though of course fragmentarily, as fodder for the films. The machine of the kinema, hard at work, draws music too into its mechanism.

Love, betrayal, persecution, murder, have somewhere and somewhen between Mozart and Stravinsky produced their musical equivalent, or something that may be accepted for it. The film consumes ruthlessly as much music as it can absorb. It should have no need of this. Since spatial art must oppose time art, and music that disregards this incompatibility is bound to fall into the grotesque, it ought to be sufficient to accompany the movement of the film with music that matches it rhythmically and dynamically and rises to a parallel climax, but disregards melody. I found this nearly realized in the Potemkin film. On the other hand, Richard Strauss regrettably let himself be induced, for reasons not difficult to understand, to recast his " Rose Cavalier " music for the kinema,

an attempt that was necessarily doomed to failure.

But let us consider the matter a moment longer. To utilize valuable music for the films, as is often done to-day with insufficient means, but sometimes, particularly in America, with the adequate resources of good musicians, of admirably equipped orchestras, cannot fail to lead to its depreciation and to the devastation of those imaginative powers which have so far gone to the making of music. The wear and tear of melody especially proceeds at an alarming rate.

The radio is another power that promotes deterioration. It weakens the mind while it popularizes; it ministers to the ingenuousness of the aural sense as the film does to that of the visual.

For those who imagine the ideal sound and compare it with that attained by any public musical performance, wireless reproduction must, so far as music is concerned, always be slightly disappointing. But the hearer will remain aware of the immense possibility broadcasting holds out to the dissemination of good music. He will try to make up his mind to some sort of attitude towards it. The gramophone disc having paved the way to the radio for the ear, it is obvious that certain fundamental conditions and defects

in the reproduction of living sound must reappear there. True, where radio is concerned, we have a more immediate reproduction of the original impression of sound: with a little imagination we may picture to ourselves the human being or the group of artists who produce the music. But this in itself presupposes other experiences in sound, and it is just these which will give us a feeling of dissatisfaction. Here again it is the human voice which remains most faithful, most alive, so to speak, in becoming mechanized. The sound of the voice may be reinforced at will by loud speakers. As soon as this is done, however, all the finer vibrations of song are lost. It is not difficult to understand why radio often does greater justice to a small voice that carries well than to the biggest tone. The next-best chance of a satisfactory realization seems to be reserved for chamber music. The more complex a texture, the smaller is the possibility of perfect reproduction. All the dynamics of the original become modified in broadcasting. Lower registers are overshadowed by higher. A plastic impression is therefore possible only under the most favourable conditions, only when the single player's power of suggestion grows into a synthesis by

moderate multiplication. To make the sound of the piano come over the wireless at all is extraordinarily difficult and demands special observance of radio conditions. All incisive sounds, so long as they are not too sharply accentuated, reach the listener's ear most truly. Whether the development of present-day music is to conform to the conditions of broadcasting or not will sooner or later show itself.

The wireless, needless to say, reckons with unlimited possibilities. Not only all the valuable music of the past, but that of the present as well, it tries to utilize for itself and to make accessible to others. It keeps its own orchestra, enters into an alliance with opera houses, occasionally gives its own oratorio-like performances of operas in the studio, engages the finest vocalists, gives symphonies by Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert —in short, it rises so far to the heights as it is allowed by a public which demands above all breadth. For however highly we may rate the potentialities of technical perfection in the wireless, a limit will always be set to its artistic exploitation by the general public's lack of feeling for quality and fine gradation, to which the present state of radio music fully corresponds. It may be gratifying or it may not that even in the dirtiest

artisans' cottages in England the occupiers will go without their bath rather than without the wireless. Many people may think it elevating that a man on a tramp through the woods or anywhere else may open a box and listen to a Beethoven symphony. But at the same time this is alarming to the musician, whose art is now robbed of all that is festive and so debased as to become a mere accompaniment to an everyday existence which uses up immense quantities of music in unhallowed places. A love of noise that grows visibly in post-war times works to this end, noise being a kind of aural gymnastic for those who are trained by sport. The engine of the motor-car, that musical apotheosis of machinery, is handled with a positively childish delight, especially in Italy, the home of Marinetti, who idolizes the machine ; the buzzing propeller is heavenly music.

What broadcasting may do to spread the cult of music need not be shown at great length. But it is certain that, even if we disregard the ever-present danger of atmospheric disturbances, the wireless transmits a bald reproduction, that the tone of the strings approximates to wind and takes on a mongrel quality at a crescendo. The current that establishes itself between hearer and

performer when the latter is visible may possibly be replaced by another, less immediate impression, by a new kind of current, or perhaps even by a new objectivity which, it is true, must tend to weaken the listener's receptiveness and restrict his imaginative collaboration in the creative process. We shall, however, have to resign ourselves to making the most of the purely musical possibilities of broadcasting, and to try how the hearer's fancy may best be nourished by abnormities.

There is this to be said: to our awareness that we are confronted by the inevitable is added our recognition of the fact that the radio has established itself as a means of verbal dissemination. Like the film, it inevitably brought music in its train. Before long the "talkie" film will achieve the realization of the most incredible things. The alliance of film and gramophone reproduction, the advent of Blum's musical chronometer, which ensures the synchronization of picture and music, points to the mechanical accomplishments we shall have to reckon with.

Eye and ear, coming to the aid of brains that seek relaxation from an excess of work or are by nature averse to effort, demand their victims. Habitual things continue to triumph over solemn occasions. Light entertainment discourages the

study of problems. The newspaper, always an everyday vehicle, becomes the natural confederate of the wireless, which is frequently a verbal journal, and of the film, which becomes often enough an animated gazette. Even in the papers the eye demands its due: drawings and photographs supplant the printed word. Other columns in the press seek to counteract this growing shallowness by a greater supply of periodical articles which exhort the public to consider various questions of the day. But the desire to read is weakened in hundreds of thousands of people who have harnessed their eyes and ears to mechanisms, who listen to the wireless or watch films for hours. Yet there are already minds so surcharged and so ready to become relaxed by sensations devoid of psychological interest that they go to sleep during the performance of a film and may actually visit the kinema for this purpose.

This triumph of the commonplace, discouraging as it is, nevertheless has the advantage of having secured a victory to immediate impressions. This is true not only of verbal and musical sound, of films and drawings, but also of the printed book other than the novel, so long as the author understands the requirements of his age without becoming the slave of topicality.

The educational ideal of the middle class, once served by immoderate reading, is shattered; there is no longer that piling up of material which stood in the way of a direct sensuous impression. Quotations are no longer current, for the classics have lost their meaning and their value. The few captions that accompany the film mean more than most things seen in print.

Superficiality and intellectual laziness have won their victory and robbed music, like the rest, of its divinity. But a road is made for new experiences and a new sort of culture.

VII—THE DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLE

ALL this seems to accord perfectly with the democracy that is supposed to permeate the world. One might perhaps as well say that it accords with communism, which is legally established in Russia alone and opposed elsewhere for reasons of self-preservation, both by monarchies and republics. But there are contradictions. It will be found that the agreement between politics, internal as well as foreign, and art is of the slightest. For it is possible that communistic states may actually strive towards the realization of a higher artistic ideal than the countries which call themselves democracies. The social and political confusion left by the war, which the choicest minds regard as a constant cause for anxiety, quite naturally affects the state of art also.

There is something ambiguous about democracy. As a practical aim it is unattainable, but for that very reason it is capable of breeding a new soul, a new humanity. We are still immeasurably far from that goal. Mankind is inwardly despoiled. Only groups and sects acknowledge an ideal. The main effort wastes

itself upon economic needs. The world trembles at the sight of a contest between capitalism and communism. No doubt the social consciousness has become more tender in general; but capitalism is victorious and has in fact degenerated into super-capitalism in one of the world's authoritative places—in America.

If we look at the map of Europe, it is clear that a division into states according to races cannot exist for the musician, and can only be artificially established where any art is concerned. There is hardly a dividing line left apart from that between the Latin and the Teuton, and even this is not altogether clearly traced. Russian artistic race manifestation seems to all intents and purposes to have run to seed by this time. Such is the racial background of art in an over-ripe age and after an arbitrary distribution by international politics.

Democracy surely takes its most curious form in America, where the crassest plutocracy does not seem to exclude popular freedom; but if forms of development are the most interesting study, then Germany's groping forward towards a true democracy may well claim the world's attention. It is remarkable to observe how the powerful remnants of a military caste, forcibly

led into the way of life of the middle classes, but not fused with them, continue to insinuate new obstacles into an otherwise quiet development, and how this produces its counter-reactions on the other side, beyond the home boundaries.

If we in Germany are faced with the interspersion into the middle classes of people who are almost always artistically unproductive, a social revaluation has on the other hand produced itself by the impoverishment of the average citizen after the war, and the enrichment of the classes least burdened by intellect. This could not fail to influence art. The fundamental trait of the new mode of life is a craving for enjoyment and the warding off of all that tends to impair it. Money is more readily spent on a dinner than on a fine artistic performance.

Democracy, which spends its intellectual resources in the upbringing of a new humanity, sees in music one of its chief means of education. It may well be doubted whether this one-sidedness is justified and whether the right way has been chosen to enforce it; but we Germans shall have to make the best we can of the fact that nearly all over the rest of the world democracy, real or pretended, makes music serve educational ends. The fact that in troubled years not long

past the art was pressed into the service of political objects might almost tempt one to doubt the seriousness of such endeavours; but they may be successful within certain limits in a country like Germany, where the love of music is in the people's blood and moreover a far-reaching old musical culture still leaves indelible traces. Folksongs may no longer be drawn from the soil; musical comedy has done much harm; the new music produces but little that is accessible to large sections of the populace; classical symphonic music is at hand as a matter of course, but its supply is restricted, though it may be drawn from composers as recent as Mahler or even Schönberg and Stravinsky. It is singing we want, and we get it, too. Among the large choirs which form themselves we find the beginnings of a vigorous choral prosperity. More than that, in all parts of Germany young people are gathered together by Fritz Jöde for the purpose of community singing, apparently by accident, but needless to say not unintentionally, and with a strongly ethical aim. It is the past above all that comes to life again through this activity and is intended to yield future results by infusing music into the people. The endeavour goes beyond folksong to the universal

artsong. Palestrina, Orlandus Lassus and other masters are performed with more or less skill. "Performed" is the word, for although sung in the open-air, in a forest perhaps, these choruses have not the effect of a spontaneous effort on the part of a choral society. Bach's Chorals show that these singers have reached a high level. New choral composers supporting the "Musicians' Guild" but scantily, its field of activity remains limited and its influence on the future doubtful. At a time as difficult as this, when machinery combats imagination, even the best intentions cannot conjure back the ideal conditions of the sixteenth century.

The choral revival is most remarkable in Britain, where the provinces achieve astonishing things. That country's indifference to serious music appears hopeless where the masses and society, including the governing authorities, are concerned, but one cannot help admiring the activity of such choirs as those of Scotland, which organize a true singing contest, or that of Newcastle conducted by W. G. Whittaker which, taking Bach as a starting-point, progresses towards the uttermost refinement of choral singing.

That France, in spite of her democracy, but very sparingly turns music to educational account,

while America cultivates a musical democracy to a much greater extent, need only be remarked in passing.

Let us not undervalue what democracy does for music; yet we must always return to the consideration of the immense opposing force of machinery, which scorns such an adversary.

The artist, who in the depths of his social consciousness still remains a convinced idealist, looks round and says to himself that all the romanticism of the past was somehow bound up with the aristocracy. It throve in courtly surroundings, as in earlier times the troubadours flourished among the splendours of the court. If he wishes to be a democrat, he tells himself, he must renounce romanticism. The world he lives in and its economic necessities alone would induce him to do so. In Russia a highly developed and very singular art of the theatre prospers and orchestras thrive, thanks to extraordinary musical aptitude and to a natural sense of fellowship which the Government promotes as a matter of course. The artist is still revered and celebrated as an exceptional being; but artistic evolution is nevertheless impeded by communism, which refuses to let the people acknowledge any strong individuality. Music,

here again, is regarded as one of the principal means of education. It could not be cultivated more seriously. But where is all this to end ?

Democracy in its present European forms, the artist feels, is vitiated by an irrepressible tendency towards the mediocre, towards a general levelling of all art. He sees the aristocracy dispossessed and the Mæcenas of artistic tastes no longer active in Europe. His ideals are thwarted by monetary considerations. Perhaps they always were, so far as the executive artist was concerned ; but, now more than ever, the artist is tempted to go to the land which, though democratic in its attitude and its constitution, not only tolerates but cultivates a plutocracy that is the heir of the old aristocracy—America.

Although democratic in his outlook, the artist nevertheless rejoices in the victory of capital. He surrenders to it and makes terms with it, taking his place in the great economic machine which is kept going at full steam across the Atlantic.

VIII—THE ALMIGHTY CONDUCTOR

YES, the artist is content to see the world as it is to-day. No politician by nature, a democrat by inclination and, needless to say, in his heart of hearts an aristocrat and plutocrat, he is not sorry to see capitalism gain its victory over communism.

When I speak of the artist, I do not in the first place mean the instrumental performer, but the man who exercises his personality to let such performers play for him—the conductor. He above every other musician profits by the triumph of capitalism. And since concert-giving has become part of the great universal industries, he has every prospect of joining the other great industrials of the world concern as their equal. It may even go farther than that when the conductor is at the same time a composer and takes to performing his own works. The most striking case is that of Richard Strauss. Though his music may not otherwise fit into our time, he has not only become part of the mechanism, but dominates it by making capital twice over, of himself and of his music.

The executive musician cannot be blamed for

being intent on money-making. That is not only a tradition, but the very nature of his case. The least productive of artists, as a rule intellectually unexacting and anxious only to make immediate contact between platform and auditorium, he must see to it that he reaps his reward without delay. If he is not businesslike, then his impresario is—generally both are.

Truly, our age has grown over-ripe. The machinery, set in motion by America, works differently, more exclusively than before. The regimen of the manager, pressed into the service of musical industry in its most highly developed form, and the consumption of artistic forces in America, appear to be unbounded.

Victorious capitalism—super-capitalism—has at last gathered together in the United States the famous teachers of music who could formerly be reached in Europe. The American music student, who once regarded the German musical academies as indispensable to his education, has now good reason to feel that he need no longer visit them. When executive artists enter into contracts for whole seasons with New York and the rest of the United States, those who grow up in the profession of music can hardly fail to believe that the musical atmosphere which had

always been missed there must needs establish itself in the end. And if tradition is not at home there, the machine dictates that its European products be exploited.

In this pretended transplantation of musical atmosphere to America it is above all the famous conductor who takes a hand. He is for the moment the principal utilizer of a capitalist order, and though not narrow-minded, not disinclined to give his services to communistic Soviet Russia and its reputedly excellent orchestras, he still looks out eagerly for the American appointment that may make him economically independent.

The combination of democracy and plutocracy has here shown itself as if especially calculated to promote the quickest and smoothest working of the concert machinery. Capitalism alone ensures subsidies which not only allow an institution to make both ends meet, but keep it going in the most generous way and for an indefinite time ; capitalism alone produces patrons whose ideals are beyond question, though it would be strange if they were not endangered by amateurishness, favouritism and the rule of women—that peculiarity of America. A patronage of art that has no equal anywhere

else certainly guarantees the subsistence of large orchestras and a continuous dismissal of their less capable members which amounts to the most stringent natural selection. Thus the great machinery of the concert industry still shows some lapses into the ideal, not to say the sentimental.

The conductor, then, finds a perfect instrument there. Although the different constituents of the orchestral body may have been invited from Europe, it remains as a whole perfectly American. That may be judged especially from the fact that, while this perpetual natural selection results in the most consummate virtuosity, a spirit of music-making has to be artificially bred which in Europe, at any rate in Germany and Austria, is an inborn matter of tradition.

It may be curious that the conductor should have become the prima donna of yesterday; but this fact again may be explained by the present tendency towards the mechanical. The prima donna had a right to be as she was. She was not wholly under an obligation to music, but regarded her part as an opportunity to serve her vanity as well as her art. Vanity of itself urged her to side with capitalism, to which she often sacrificed her body too. The conductor,

however, grown out of the precedent and the character of German musicianship, had after all to traverse several stages before he could become a prima donna. The rote of orchestral playing, the deliberate repetition of certain classical and romantic works; again, the decided preference of the post-Wagnerians of instrumental music to vocal, the war with its after-effects upon the imagination of the masses, the newspaper organization which is ready to work on his behalf: all this has caused his rise—a rise that in the last resort will be a descent.

It was the German Kapellmeister, that most useful functionary produced by no other country, who paved the way for the conducting prima donna. For only Germany, with its many court and municipal theatres, could show so wide an employment of musical directors and coaches. Here is the source of kapellmeisterish routine, which is also that of the conductor's routine. And at the conductor's desk in the opera the antics of the concert rostrum are learnt, so to speak, in conformity with the gestures of the singing actor.

Avoidance of routine it was which induced the conductor to begin to seek new refinements of interpretation, then to make the most of his

own personality, and at last to indulge a taste for notoriety. The results were contortions of himself and distortions of great works.

In Germany too the public changed. At first devoted to institutions, such as Philharmonic or Gewandhaus concerts, it began to swear by one man. Hans von Bülow already encouraged this desertion of a cause for a personality; in the case of Artur Nikisch, who was otherwise disposed and fundamentally a more serious musician, a man-of-the-world appearance contributed to the renaming of the concerts he conducted, as it did with Weingartner, different though he again was from Nikisch. It is only too natural that this kind of thing should become more flagrant in a younger generation, in men like Bruno Walter, Furtwängler, Klemperer and Kleiber. Other countries also take their share, with Mengelberg in Holland and, more especially, with Toscanini, the dictator of the Scala in Milan, whose glorification knows no bounds.

The conductor is scarcely less tyrannous to-day than the prima donna once was; but he is also more dangerous, for he may affect the very core of the art whose guardian he ought to be. For how else is he to justify his task, his office, his high position and his salary, he who is as good

as immune from the contingency of a breakdown to which both the instrumentalist and the vocalist are subject ? Truly, the reversion is complete : the prima donna was once notorious for the manner in which she would handle a conductor ; to-day the musical director humbles the singer, whom he generally regards as a mere means to the glorification of his own exalted person, in a way that can on occasion become fantastic.

There is no doubt that the present emotional disposition of the German star conductor, which allows his naturally innate idealism but casual outlets, only loosely connects him with the institutions which may actually bear his name. Directly he is enticed by the super-capitalistic America, he cannot resist the temptation. It may then happen that organizations which have their value, if any, only through the conductor's methodical work on programmes and performances are left in the lurch.

The infusion of a musical atmosphere into the great concert machinery of New York and the rest of the United States succeeds, of course, but partially. For where there is no tradition of musical culture, variety of topical events will be needed above all. Moreover, the mental direction of that small fraction of the population

which habitually listens to music and represents a fixed body of concert-goers, is different. One does not live for nothing in the machine that is New York: change will be required in the men who conduct also, particularly when they are paid like prima donnas.

This, then, is the position:—while no amount of democracy saves the German orchestras, even the largest, from indigence, the conductors whose existence would be unthinkable without Germany's widespread concert and orchestral cult become important members of a capitalistic world organization in the country which sets the great machine of international commerce in motion.

The almighty conductor, who, be it said, travels not only to North America, but to South America as well, does his utmost to damage European musical life at its very root.

IX—THE DECLINE OF THE CONCERT

WHAT has recently been going on indicates the decay of a form of aural communication which, all told, has not lasted longer than a hundred and fifty years.

At first there was music, which itself came late enough into the world's activities. Very much later came the concert, which had to rise from primitive beginnings to its present highly developed state. On the nobler side its pedigree shows descent from home music, on the more ignoble from the theatre. Traces of both may still be discerned in it to-day. The concert has injured home music in the very seat of its vitality while it has absorbed all the vanities of which opera was the scene. There is no sin against the sacred spirit of music that cannot be committed at a concert, though that is true only, at any rate for the time being, because the holiest of holies also can be revealed there.

The concert, itself debased to machinery by the traffic of music, is now threatened by another kind of machinery. More than that, it is clearly condemned to decline little by little. We stand before the last phase of concert life.

At a time when the hearing of music at concerts already shows signs of decrepitude, the need of immediacy in the transmission of impressions makes itself felt with cruel insistence. We still know great raptures in the concert-room; the current which spreads from the visible and excited executant into the auditorium still generates itself easily and powerfully. And we have just seen what miracles a conductor may still work to-day, not least thanks to the optical impression he produces. Besides, it is not so much he and his orchestral or choral concert whose existence is becoming precarious as the single performer's recital, which knew a prime of some five decades after 1870. Its decline might be accounted for by the conditions that govern a solo performance: long before the machine offered music its services, long before the invention of the wireless, the discrepancy between supply and demand was very noticeable here. Only special events capable of arousing great enthusiasm, which in any case were economically sound, justified themselves. The artistic personality of some performers and the variety between them would often make the hearer forget the absurdity of listening to music in this way. Examples present themselves

readily. Where a theatrical element is not inherent in the artist, as in the case of Paganini, Catalani, Liszt, Berlioz and even Wagner, a talent for the formation of an artistic community by a leading personality and a musically uniform collective receptiveness alone are capable of creating an ideal type of concert. It is not to be denied that this type is still occasionally found; but it is evident that the contrary is the rule and that in most cases there can be no question of creative collaboration on the part of an audience.

It is not altogether natural for a pianist, a singer of songs or a chamber musician to present himself to the masses. The opera singer and the violinist, in so far as he may be devoted to pure melody, is more likely to feel himself urged to do so.

The clear division between creative and executive musicianship, which came about in the nineteenth century, gave the executant a share in creation under certain conditions. This was due to the supremacy of nervous excitements at that time. Where romanticism thrives, musical interpretation must needs grow more intense. The composer writes his notes with an eye on what the player will make of them. He becomes

more scrupulous about his directions, but he knows that each note of his music will be strained through the performer's sensations.

The concert lived on this belief in the ascendancy of the executant. Even for the species of music which seem opposed to being dragged into large concert halls there was a public demand. This explains the impression made by a Rubinstein, a d'Albert, a Lilli Lehmann, a Julia Culp, a Busoni, a Rosenthal. And the incredible became true: chamber music, apparently made for a small community at most, came into the forefront of concert-giving through the enterprise of the Joachim Quartet.

But these influences grew palpably weaker later on. Wear and tear made itself felt. The trade demanded too much. It confined improvisation, the intoxication of creative collaboration, to exceptional cases. Concert-giving as a profession is inimical to transports. The instrumental performer especially, once he has mastered his tricks, remains cool enough to be immune to enchantment as well as to the accidents of mood.

The ascendancy of technique over inspiration explains itself. The mechanical nature of the musical traffic promotes mechanical execution. The very methods of piano and violin playing

are now cold and deliberate. Enthusiasm is the exception. It comes most easily when creator and executant are one, when a musician endowed with a consummate conducting technique produces a work of his own. In such a case suggestion most readily becomes potent.

The material of performance, too, easily becomes standardized. The traffic eats up too much music. Even where the classic-romantic conventions of programme-making are overcome, the remedy of novelties does not prove altogether efficacious against a deep-seated evil. There is a real pleasure in new music that draws some people to concerts ; but snobbery is predominant and easily becomes indifferent to anything other than a first performance. Thus modern music too exhausts itself rapidly and even the concert organized to purely ideal ends leads a precarious existence.

To these causes, mostly internal, of the decline of a certain aspect of culture at a time of musical civilization, must be added others of a more external nature. Concert organization has become so expensive that, at any rate in Europe, it very rarely pays the artist, and sometimes not even the promoter. The rent of a hall, fees, printing, entertainment tax, and

especially advertisement in all its forms, swallow up sums which even a full house can hardly recover. This is hurtful to a soloist's recital and more so to an orchestral concert. The world's currency, which has increased everywhere, makes any orchestral rehearsal vastly more expensive than before the war. Every extra instrument used in ambitiously scored works makes the cost of preparation soar still higher. Thus the expenditure for orchestral concerts would mount up immeasurably if a constant renewal of the programme required more and more rehearsal. It is therefore only too natural that the old-established items are preferred, particularly in Germany. This too suits the conservatism of the average audiences, which by the way have anything but improved their constituents. They could scarcely be expected to show any inclination to listen attentively to untried and recondite works. It actually comes about that a soloist who wishes to play a work written with an orchestral accompaniment dispenses with this for economic reasons. The inadequacy of such a procedure is obvious.

The costliness of the musical organism must inevitably lead to corruption. It is not what artists can do that is decisive, at least not ex-

clusively, but what they show themselves willing to do, often quite unabashed, in return for an engagement. The best of the long-established concerts may be exceptions; for the rest one may say that the engagement of a soloist is nearly always based on personal and monetary considerations of every sort. There are understandings between one conductor and another, between conductors and soloists, between soloists and music's industrials. The reason why the concert is about to decay is that in its essence it is no longer a reflexion of the ideal musical endeavours of our time.

But concert-giving had made progress in England, in France—or rather Paris—and even in Italy, and that for reasons not difficult to understand. In England, and especially in London, the indifference of the vast majority of the population has the effect of making the decline of concert organizations still more apparent. For the rest, it is the verdict of society that rules. Names like those of Fritz Kreisler, Elena Gerhardt and possibly a few more are irresistibly attractive enough to fill a gigantic and anti-musical place like the Albert Hall. A first-rate orchestra does not exist. The Promenade Concerts at Queen's Hall, where the

indefatigable Henry Wood did his educative work, now lead a precarious existence by the good grace of the British Broadcasting Corporation. Invitations of famous conductors to perform with inadequate instrumentalists are no rarities. A certain amount of exchange with America, with England as a decided second, is to be noted.

In Paris the traffic begins when it comes to an end in America. The post-war period has caused the Paris season, which is at the same time a sporting season, to blossom artificially. A few weeks of concert life pass at a lively tempo and often with full houses. Novelty, in fact novelty more than anything else, celebrates its momentary victories, especially under Serge Kussevitzky, who appears there regularly. All the world meets in Paris. People pretend to do homage to music, but this merely because there is a widespread view that it serves to give intellectual spice to the enjoyment of life. Music is declared fit for polite society, and on the home soil of the salon cliques and worse things grow easily.

Italy, never too favourable to the establishment of concerts, has at present few centres where they are cultivated. Milan, Turin, Rome,

Florence and Bologna have something to show in that line; but it is not of great consequence.

I have not yet mentioned criticism, which here and there in Europe, but especially in Germany, makes its influence felt. Criticism too, where it really expresses conviction, is almost wholly drawn into the machine-like concert organization.

Such an organization in its highest mechanical development is to be found in America, in New York. That country, which was before the war Germany's chief customer, which entered the world's history late and was from the beginning mainly intent on material gain, appears to have inherited concert-giving from Germany; but it almost immeasurably enlarged the system according to its industrial peculiarities. Where sensation means so much more than anything else, the demise of the concert seems for the moment to be far off as yet, the more so because the western and southern States as well as Canada still await cultivation. That alone indicates a variety and extent of musical life such as could not elsewhere be attained. Neither does there appear to be any limit to the financial exploitation of these possibilities. The sport of comparison between performances clearly goes to the length

of a craving. But even if the danger of satiety were not present already, a resolve to tolerate nothing but outstanding excellence would come about quite naturally. That alone would lead to a restriction of the means of livelihood for mediocre musicians. But then, the verdict of American taste is so dependent on chance that a concert-giver's pecuniary opportunities cannot be safely calculated. It need hardly be mentioned that managers and advertisements are unduly influential.

About this there can be no doubt: even against the most highly developed machinery of musical organization the other machine, which itself produces music or is set in motion to produce it, will in the end compete with success. Concert activity, so much is certain, is what made music by wireless possible; now the radio prepares to make concert activity possible. For as soon as the broadcasting authorities have persuaded themselves that they can reproduce music to absolute perfection and without leaving anything to be desired, they will wish to take the concert, which is now writhing in its death-throes, under their protection. That they harass it for the present is evident; but the example of the British Broadcasting Corporation proves that they know

how to step into the breaches of concert life. Already artists of the front rank place themselves at the disposal of the wireless, which is by far the wealthiest musical institution. More than that, while formerly an artist could make a reputation, at least within the circle of music lovers, by giving a recital, broadcasting to-day begins to make names and, in exceptional cases, to prepare successful concert careers for those who bear them.

What the radio fails to do may be accomplished by the "talkie" film. The wireless lacks the sight of the performer, the living impression of an artist's appearance, but just as the talking film is a menace to theatres, at any rate to second-rate ones, so the musical film is becoming a danger to the less important executive musicians. To this one may object that however perfect the reproduction of an artistic performance by the "talkie" may become, the listening spectator will miss the impression of a personal appearance and of a spontaneous delivery; that after all only a machine will be at work. The consolation is small, but it may be reckoned with. All the same, we shall have to face the fact that first-rate work alone will be of use to talking and musical films and

that this will be obtained only by a "natural selection" from the best artistic material.

The only certain thing is that the declining concert is confronted by strong opponents. It has to maintain itself against the ascendancy of the machine. We stand amid developments of which only a general view is to be obtained. The one decisive issue will always lie with the manner in which immediate impressions assert themselves, and after that with the question whether production supports reproduction.

X—MUSICAL FESTIVALS AND FAIRS

THE lack of solemnity in musical life, its approach to everyday things and its machine-like development have given a new turn to the musical festival, which has always meant an escape from the common run of musical events. Before the war musical festivals were different from those of to-day. Although they may have become habitual institutions, they were yet somehow imbued with a romantic spirit. There were comparatively few of them. The Nether-Rhenish Festival and that of the Allgemeiner Deutscher Musikverein marked the height of musical festivity. The magic name of Liszt gave the musicians' assemblies a particular tone: people believed in progress and hoped to believe in the birth of a new genius, if not actually to witness it. Then Bayreuth became a festival city, a shining example, a brilliant realization of ideas. But it was precisely the Wagnerian succession that was bound to discourage the progressives more and more. Yet gatherings went on. Richard Strauss had appeared and begun to extend the idea of the festival play; but he so rapidly became a

world figure that the whole organization was as a matter of course left suspended. Smaller personalities began to take the field; people of sound views and craftsmanlike capabilities took the place of genius. A man like Max Reger was still ready to step in, chiefly in defence of German music. But the Allgemeiner Deutscher Musikverein was devoted only to the so-called progressive spirit in German composition.

The war made short work of musical festivals, as it did of a good deal of music in general. Music-making by rote got its own way everywhere.

After this long interval began, not at once, but still sooner than in other domains of art, a movement in favour of the musical festival, and that an international movement. For the first time, at Salzburg, works and musicians from a number of countries that were politically estranged found themselves united. It may be that the publishers had already, in their own interests, paved the way for friendly relations between the world's musicians; but a need made itself felt all round to catch in the mirror of the universal situation the artistic reflexions of those days, which found their positively astounding expression not least in music. This happened

in the summer of 1922, after an exhibition of several works by European composers that was at any rate instructive, if not systematic. Music too seemed to have gone completely to pieces during the years of expressionist excesses. The idea was to throw light into this witches' kitchen and to determine the tendencies of, as well as the differences between, this and that nation or race. Thus the International Society for Contemporary Music was founded. For its centre London was chosen, partly for political reasons, and for its president the English musical scholar Edward J. Dent. It was decided to give an annual musical festival, at first at Salzburg. Political obstructions were surmounted or at least meant to be disregarded. An international spirit was to reign supreme and collaborate closely with the latest artistic outlook. National sections formed themselves as a matter of course in all countries. A jury was to be elected later on.

Next to this foundation, which aimed at clarifying artistic consciousness after years of forcible separation of musical efforts in various countries, others appeared. Especially in the broken down post-war Germany there was a marked hankering after mysticism, a desire for

purification, a kind of religious practice of art that set itself against the prevalent confusion. Sects came into being. Musical festivals established themselves everywhere. The German craze for forming clubs blossomed, but also bore its fruit. The festival idea, be it said, materialized not only in old Europe, not only under the auspices of Mozart or far smaller musical saints, but also in America, where chamber music festivals testified to new endeavours and conceptions, and where contemporary music called to life special associations designed to further its interests. The patronage of Mrs. Coolidge became particularly fruitful there.

All this promised a great deal. While the older musical festivals resumed their habitual course, new institutions of the kind shot up vigorously. Meanwhile strife broke out. Political hatred and national narrowness violently disputed the possibility of art being defended for its own sake and apart from politics. The loss of the most sacred possessions was feared, and especially that of the integrity of German music. Leading articles profoundly and passionately discussed the concepts of the international and the national in art.

The foundation of the musical festivals at

Donaueschingen, however, showed how keenly even those who stood apart from the formation of the future music were being made aware of their duty towards it. A German prince, Egon of Fürstenberg, suddenly remembered, at a time when princes in Germany no longer counted, the traditional artistic obligations of princely houses, and in 1921 became active in the idyllic little town in the Black Forest and in conjunction with the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, on behalf of the elevation and clarification of the latest music. It is, once again, significant for German musical culture that, away from Berlin, whose metropolitan traffic threatens to consume everything, a musical movement should be started at the south-west corner of the country that could not remain without influence on the whole trend of the art. For here, within a small circle, all that was hopeful came together, and a name appeared which at once gained currency—that of Paul Hindemith, a musician of Rhenish descent, born at Hanau, a violist by profession and educated under Bernhard Sekles at Hoch's Conservatoire in Frankfort. He represented a new sort of connexion between the most careful musical education and bohemianism. It was time to set a term to the subversive bungling

that was the order of the day. Hindemith, the representative of a new youth whose years of childhood coincided with the war, had traditions in him which warranted a fair development; but he also possessed a vitality that continued to nourish, enliven and incite his inborn musicianship. In the Black Forest townlet there was an almost cabaret-like life among the associates whose head was Hindemith, but among whom were other representatives of the new youth, particularly the members of his quartet. But this was only the outward relaxation of an unquestionable seriousness. The chamber music festivals at Donaueschingen, under the direction of the conductor Heinrich Burkard, gathered together year by year a gradually increasing circle that was offered a choice from the most recent musical creation. It may well be said that Donaueschingen was the ideal festival town for young musical Germany. A landscape that was not too enticing to become an end in itself, yet strengthened the atmosphere by its charm, let the youngest music grow out of its soil, so to speak. The surroundings and the conditions of the place itself breathed utter freedom from pretension. The more exactingly, though never without benevolence, could one

watch the utterances of young German musicians there. The domain of chamber music was scarcely ever left, but occasionally expanded. The names of Ernst Křenek, Alban Berg, Aloys Haba, Philipp Jarnach, and later of Max Butting and Felix Petyrek, not only became familiar to those who visited the festivals, but to the whole of Germany. More than that, a secret alliance between Donaueschingen and Salzburg was to be suspected; only Salzburg, with a population that had been corrupted by the goings-on after the war, was a far less favourable scene for musical festivals, in spite of all its recollections of Mozart. Internationalism conquered Donaueschingen too, for it was precisely to chamber music that foreigners contributed their best.

Here, as in Salzburg, there were discoveries of new talent. There was chaos next to clear achievements. Various problematic aspects were regarded in various ways. Every shade of what is known by the collective name of modernism was represented. In spite of the internationalism that forbade the arrangement of festival programmes according to nations, the utmost possible concessions were made to national conditions and prejudices. Needless to say, only a relatively representative total picture of

contemporary musical production was to be given. To err is never more human than in outward circumstances in themselves apt to promote error. That the most careful performance of the programmes by specially gifted artists was aimed at goes without saying, since they had all the world for audience.

Now two things inevitably came to cloud the picture. Firstly, the almost unavoidable formation of cliques, and secondly, the encroachment of commerce on a sphere that ought by rights to be removed from it. For the musical festival is actually meant to be an escape from commerce. Unfortunately, however, it is organized by people who are in the midst of it, and even a jury is not free from them. Party spirit, self-interest, to say nothing of other and worse things, may influence the choice of works. Moreover—and this is inherent in the commercial aspect—there may be hasty work done for the occasion. It becomes more and more noticeable that the slow maturing of a work and musical festivity are opposed to each other. The progressive clarification of technical and æsthetic matters, too, tends to diminish the number of sensationally interesting works. But this would happen in any case, since the hearer finds this kind of

music to be wearing least well. The proportion of valuable works to the total number of those set down on the programme grows smaller and smaller.

This is the case with every musical festival, but more likely to endanger international ones than others. The event may be moved from Salzburg to Prague or Venice or Zürich—where, by the way, a climax was to be noted—or to Frankfort; expectations are sure to remain unfulfilled and nothing is left but a more or less beautiful unanimity in the relations between musicians of various countries. At the same time, it cannot be overlooked that from the very beginning the French, not without the influence of various phases in their foreign affairs, put considerable difficulties into the way of a realization of the festival idea, while the Italians, under the leadership of the ever active and adroit Alfredo Casella, were only too ready to turn the festival to the advantage of real or imagined musical values of their own.

The detection of new talents certainly becomes increasingly difficult, however widely the domain of chamber music may be expanded. The names of Stravinsky, Schönberg, Ravel, Arthur Honegger, Darius Milhaud, Béla Bartók, Zoltán Kodály,

Paul Hindemith, Ernst Křenek, Philipp Jarnach and a few others are no longer discoveries, but they can neither be wholly dispensed with nor placed again and again on the programme, which without them turns out meagre enough. And the business aspect that plays its part behind the scenes of the festival, though needless to say it leaves the supreme authorities uninfluenced, again reminds us of the industrialism that is the new fundamental fact of our artistic life.

The Donaueschingen Festival removed to the fashionable watering-place of Baden-Baden, the princely house having tired of supporting contemporary music. The scene is changed, the circle of listeners enlarged, and it is fondly imagined that a wider public has been gained for the new music. But those who are won over are as a rule those already predisposed to be won, and if they are seriously minded they are apt to become doubly critical and to come away from the more pretentious place profoundly disappointed.

Machinery, with the art of advertising following in its wake, has made its entry here as elsewhere. It is the symbol of what a musical festival must eventually become.

The wear and tear of the festival idea in the new Germany, and to some extent in the rest

of the world too, is beginning to make itself felt. Here again we become aware of the one-sidedness of a musical culture the essential motive of which is intellectual laziness. The present superabundance of creative and executive musicians of itself leads to a preposterous situation. It is hard to save anything of value out of all these excesses.

To raise the musical fair once more to the level of the musical festival is difficult. It is not impossible.

XI—THE WORLD'S OPERA

THERE is a widespread belief that opera has a world public, but it is essentially the belief of large cities.

On the face of it, nothing should be more fit for popularity than opera; but the fact is that it was, and still is, truly popular only in Italy, and possibly in Vienna, so far as the Austrian inhabitants are concerned.

To this it will, of course, be objected that Germany stands alone with her far-reaching ramifications of operatic culture. Where some hundred and ten opera houses are busy satisfying the people's operatic hunger, the demand on the part of all classes for this product of art certainly appears to be as general as possible. But there are many musicians and music lovers in the German provinces who, having no regard for opera, take their purest pleasure in chamber music and to some extent in orchestral and choral music, not to mention the many thousands who, tied to their home towns, are obliged to deny themselves the pleasure of an operatic performance for good and all.

The opera's claim to popularity is based on the combination of an easily comprehensible action rich in climaxes with an immediately appealing music that follows the situations as closely as possible. But because there is no sort of blood relation between these two factors, and because any artistic connexion between them cannot be established without concessions on the musician's part, many true lovers of music suspect opera of artistic duplicity and treat it with contempt. Yet this very spuriousness, which it would be idle to deny, attracts and heightens the attention of those who do not care for music for its own sake. Against this, it is true, must be set those who make the highest demands of the drama and whom even the finest singing does not compensate for the absence of any logically apprehensible psychology of action.

Considering the space which opera still claims in our newspapers, we cannot help feeling surprised at the small percentage represented by the opera-going public in the bulk of music lovers.

Let us look at America. A hundred and thirty million people are, or at least were until a short time ago, restricted to two opera houses—the New York Metropolitan and the Chicago

Opera House. The average American can thus never form any sort of intimate connexion with opera. The American pluto-democracy harbours an essentially plutocratic opera which shows a modest attempt to become democratic in the plan to construct a new house. It is, by the way, the most international opera in the world, for the works are almost always sung in their original languages.

European opera may have its greatest colony in Germany, but its capital, thanks to Arturo Toscanini, is the Teatro alla Scala in Milan. The typically Italian organization by seasons has matured this most precious fruit. If the New York Metropolitan is to-day known as an opera house with a great reputation, it owes this in the first place to the past activities of Toscanini, who, however, made good use of the experiences he gathered there in reforming the seasonal management of the Scala. Concerted efforts are brought to the greatest possible perfection there, regardless of time and money. Even a singer who may not be of outstanding excellence comes under the influence of the prevailing spirit, which improves him by inciting him to the uttermost efforts. The man at the helm, Toscanini, who has an almost priestly conception of his

art, so transforms the system of the season as to make it conducive to the formation of a definite programme. Rehearsals are as good as unlimited. Between the performances are days of rest, and these will be readily increased in the case of a singer's indisposition that means a choice between cancelling a performance or presenting a less than perfect one. All this naturally presupposes absolute power for the musical director and unlimited financial means. The deficit, which goes into seven figures, is again and again covered by an administration that consists partly of municipal authorities and partly of patrons.

The maintenance of the Scala in this form appears to be bound up with the personality of its master. The opera houses elsewhere in Italy, with Turin at their head, cannot compare with this theatre. Many of them represent various degrees of mediocrity.

Opera in France—that is to say, in Paris—with its two State-supported houses, the Opéra and the Opéra-Comique, is reputed to live in a state of inertia. Tradition is unshakable. Performances under conductors who have little left but routine become cast-iron and perfunctory. Any kind of movement in a new direction is as

little to be noticed as enterprise in the choice of singers. It is hardly credible that in two neighbouring and racially related countries there should be so great a difference between festive and workaday operatic performances. The whole truth of Stendhal's comparison between Italian and French opera to the detriment of the latter becomes evident here. One cannot help being positively stupefied by the lax participation of the chorus even in such a work as "Carmen," which is, after all, a French national possession, but is clearly treated far better as the whole world's property. The complacency of French opera, which declines any favourable foreign influence as superfluous, never ceases to cause amazement. And yet, the performance of a truly French work like Debussy's "Pelléas et Mélisande" shows something which could not be achieved in just this way anywhere else in the world. Spirit, word and even sound are here exemplary.

In England a movement in favour of a more democratic opera combines with a demand for the vernacular. There is a persistent call for national English opera. The British National Opera Company proved inadequate. The papers publish appeals, with scarcely any effect. Opera

is not indigenous to England; it can only be the country's guest. The one indisputable success is that of the international season that was revived after the war. This is especially true of its German portion under the direction of Bruno Walter. A so-called Italian season of very different character follows this.

The hopes of English opera lovers are centred in Thomas Beecham who, like his father, has done much to stimulate operatic activities in England. But although heavy taxation may not have wholly ruined the wealthy Briton, riches are in the first place devoted to those enterprises which satisfy the great public's craving for amusement. Revue, musical comedy and the music-hall remain the pets of the English masses who hunger for an art of sorts.

Germany, on the other hand, has the best-organized operatic system in the world. Even to-day, after the deposition of the princes who exercised their patronage liberally, though often in the interests of their own courts alone, the whole edifice of German opera still remains unshaken and estimable, for all the scantiness of State or municipal subsidies. No other country does for opera what Germany is doing.

The Prussian State took over from the monarchy

the support of the noblest of opera houses. Democratic in its principles, it endeavours to draw the artist into the sphere of a system that is at once political and artistic. It inclines by nature to a general levelling against which the artist revolts by an inner necessity. But, becoming aware of the evil influences of such a lowering of the level and of a victory of mediocrity, it again engages exceptional personalities and takes measures which ensure first-rate operatic performances.

Practical musical life thus embarrasses the new State. On assuming the responsibility for the opera, it not only enters into the heritage of a court opera grown into a State opera, but is obliged to do justice to a democratic system based on socialist principles by the establishment of a folk opera.

The musical education of the masses through opera admittedly meets with difficulties inherent in the species itself. A State theatre for spoken drama may approximate to new political ideas, but opera, with its elusive, ambiguous music, does not conform to them so readily.

The court opera and the municipal theatre as cultural institutions, as they long existed in Germany, are in the last resort an acknowledg-

ment of the middle classes' need of enlightenment. The seasonal system remains the essential form of operatic activity; its last offshoot is the Bayreuth Festival. We owe Bayreuth to the inevitable fact that operatic performances held nightly for decades of necessity led to dullness and carelessness. If the music drama, with its unusual demands on the resources of opera, was to mark itself out as a distinctive species, it could do so only in the form of the festival play.

All the disadvantages that cling to the organization of opera are due to this:—what was designed for a festive occasion has grown into a cultural establishment. If opera were a pure form of art, the possibility of its becoming accessible to the masses would be easier to consider. As it is, it must continue to adhere to the seasonal system if it is not to lose its peculiar character. Even Verdi, the ideal Italian, whose activity reached the threshold of the twentieth century, could not take kindly to repertory opera, keenly as he felt the stir of a new spirit. Yet he was a child of the people and at least as democratic as the democrats of to-day.

It is the wish of the democratic State that all classes of the people should have their share in opera as an institution aiming at popular culture.

This leads to the ideal of the folk opera. But if opera for the middle classes, with its tendency to level everything, already meant a watering-down of the original concept in the name of culture, the idea of a people's opera cannot fail to lead to contradictions. For it places among a new set of circumstances what arose from different conditions of life and society. The people, taken in the widest socialistic sense, never having been productive in opera, all they can do now is to take the heritage of the middle class and to make what they can of it. The trouble is that the democratic slogan, "Make way for the capable," will only too easily be changed into "Make way for mediocrity."

The necessity, then, of maintaining an opera for society, which favours the exceptional, not to say the sensational, and at the same time creating an opera for the people, while doing justice to the spirit of the new age, which lies in a political bias to the left, presents enough difficulties to make the operatic organization of a republican State bristle with contradictions. The ideal of such a State is to take the whole cultivation of art under its wing. In Berlin, whose example is still followed by the provinces, it tries to realize this notion at least as far as

practical matters are concerned. This has led far enough to unite State and municipal operas by common interests, even by common efforts. The democratic principle tending in itself to equalize all things, such an organization, which appears to exclude any sort of artistic competition, would seem to be in danger of hastening the levelling process; but the republican State boasts of a keener awareness of responsibility and makes its task more difficult, as I say, by the appointment of personalities fit to produce a finer breed of opera in accordance with the new spirit. It is obvious that in such circumstances the conductor is not a mere member of the organism, but the commander, and that he takes upon himself an exceptional measure of responsibility as the custodian of works and performances. The difficulties raised by the conductor have already been dealt with: the whole future development of German opera, not only in Berlin, depends on the manner in which the conductor will take his place in its machinery, aware of his obligations but free from arrogance.

The existence of opera is hard pressed by the present decrease of new works—so much so, in fact, that a future can scarcely be predicted for it nowadays. This is not surprising: changes

in art and society as well as the influence of the machine lead to the inevitable conclusion. The remedy chosen to counteract this decline, due to irremediable conditions, is the greatest care in team work and above all innovation in operatic production. Radicalism, even in Soviet Russia, so far as we are able to follow its theatrical manifestations, likes to try out new problems of stage management. Germany is positively the land of promise for the resourceful producer. Love of naturalism and of illusion on the one hand, an inclination to the fanciful and the stylized on the other, are seen side by side. But an excess of production, which gives the utmost prominence to team work and at the same time presses all the applied arts of the present day into its service, must in the long run lead to incongruity between matter and manner, between the work and its performance, and in the end to almost vehemently deliberate efforts. But it is certain that no greater variety of presentation is to be expected anywhere than we have in Germany nowadays.

All this still leaves out of account what matters most in opera, but is made to recede only too much into the background in favour of the orchestra—the singer.

Ten years ago the complaint that the art of

song was declining was still justified; but now, although the status of that art in the world cannot be compared with that of fifty or more years ago, in Germany at any rate an advance is to be noticed in the valuation, the cultivation and the systematic training of the voice. From the moment that the exclusiveness of Wagner's music drama and of post-Wagnerian symphonic operas was surmounted and a truly vocal opera, preferably of Italian origin and connected with the name of Verdi, rose in the public estimation, a happy beginning of an improvement in this field was made.

The German woman singer was the first to sacrifice that heroic manner which in earlier years paid with a loss of voice for an increase in dramatic expressiveness. Or rather, an adjustment between vocal technique and dramatic expression used to be discouraged from the beginning, and this was a rule which the exceptional case of Lilli Lehmann only confirmed. The return to the lyrical and the comic opera opened up new possibilities for the singer. We are already gathering the harvest of this revival in figures like Lotte Lehmann, Sigrid Onegin, Elisabeth Schumann, Elisabeth Rethberg, Maria Müller, Grete Stückgold and some others. The greatest

reconciliation between voice and expression may be found in Frida Leider and still more, after a hard struggle, in Barbara Kemp, an artist who has been much worried by her problems. She is a personality of no less than historical significance, unique in Germany. Maria Jeritza, an individuality with a vocal technique not altogether above suspicion, has already set two hemispheres on fire. It is clear that the woman singer in Central Europe is in the ascendant and that the opera of the near future may expect much that is favourable in this direction.

Among the men barytones and basses predominate. The exceptional figure of Feodor Shaliapin, who is already a waning star to-day, stands alone. Next to him the master of *bel canto*, Mattia Battistini, must be regarded as a wonder. Another victorious and arresting personality, in spite of his inequality, is Michael Bohnen, and mention must be made of Friedrich Schorr, Heinrich Schlusnus, Paul Bender, Alexander Kipnis and a few more, including Joseph Schwarz, who died all too soon, and is in his way irreplaceable.

But there is no doubt that Germany suffers from a dearth of tenors, which is to be observed elsewhere in the world, though in a smaller degree.

Not the least reason for this is the new erotic outlook, but it has a good deal to do with the excessively long reign of the heroic tenor. Eroticism was once wholly bound up with the lyric tenor. The suave beauty of a voice produced so much illusion that the lyric tenor's histrionic clumsiness was entirely forgotten. The listeners, especially on the feminine side, forgot, in their rapt ecstasy, to watch him critically. It was Wagner, with his invention of the heroic tenor, who aimed the first blow at this state of things. But its after-effects might have been lost had not a transformation of our emotional life combined with a greater appeal of opera to the intellect in making the tenor an almost anachronistic figure.

Caruso reached the heights: he was at once a man and a tenor, a singer and an artist; but he is gone. It is true that in Italy and in southern countries generally, as also in Scandinavia, tenor voices still thrive in large numbers, thanks to the influence of sun and air. Those of the south are softer and more sensuous; those of the north more steely and cold. In Beniamino Gigli a rare representative of the species has been welcomed, not only at the Metropolitan Opera, but by the world at large.

In Germany it is hard to find a conductor who combines with qualities one accepts as a matter of course a true feeling for and understanding of the human voice. One of them is Bruno Walter, to whom, after Gustav Mahler, German opera in any case owes the greatest debt. There is no mistaking his endeavour to maintain a festive spirit in opera. He has an incomparable gift, not only of training first-rate singers, but of turning smaller people into great artists. He raised the Berlin Municipal Opera to a high level and much may be expected of future organizations placed under his care.

It is the great merit of this enthusiastic conductor to have united the best voices in Central Europe under his baton. He brought the flower of Vienna and Munich to Berlin. The Vienna State Opera under Franz Schalk remains, after its transient florescence under Richard Strauss, only a shadow of the once-famous Court Opera.

It must be borne in mind that economic conditions hinder the ideal cultivation of opera at every turn. It is not the super-capitalism of the conductor, but the comparatively modest capitalism of the singers, whose careers are after all but fugitive, that is fought against tooth and nail. Any kind of exaggeration is harmful. If

we wish to maintain ourselves adequately, or even to exploit the given possibilities, we must remain competitive in the world's artistic market. As things are to-day, it will be indispensable for the continuance of opera to enter into relations with other countries and to establish a system of exchange. Opera, without losing its local and national peculiarities, must become a world concern.

For we see but too clearly that the number of successful new operas is small. The repertory, based on Mozart, Wagner, Bizet, Verdi, Strauss, Puccini, Moussorgsky and a few other composers, is on the whole the same wherever opera is performed. We suffer from a standstill in dramatic composition. To all intents and purposes opera houses get along with established possessions. There must be mutual support if the general internal distress is to be alleviated. The Metropolitan, though it has unlimited means at its disposal, must not be allowed special privileges.

But is opera gradually dying out? Are there not a few young composers, among whom Ernst Křenek claims the foremost place, who seek to defer its death? Unhappily even such efforts do not justify optimism. Those who nowadays cultivate opera creatively seem to have lost all ingenuousness. Love, betrayal, murder—

such things once played their chief part in opera. Simplicity was deemed essential in the construction of a libretto. Profound and logical psychology would have been thought just as pernicious as an excess of sub-plot. Love, as the central point of opera, gave rise to the love duet as climax. Everything else followed from this and turned round it.

If we maintain, then, that the predominance of the ear and its influence on the emotions weakens every other faculty for the reception of a mixed species of art, we see at once what the last development but one and the very latest stand for in opera. Wagner's music drama rests upon the fundamental error that man's senses might and could be claimed all at once. His orchestra took to psychology and, like an octopus, drew all that mattered down to itself. The human voice, exerting itself to conform to music drama, assumed dimensions that fitted the much-extended scenes, and the masses remained unaware of the fact that it thus betrayed its vocation.

Post-Wagnerian opera brought us two things: the use of dramas almost word for word as librettos and the change in the status of the operatic producer already referred to. This is the consequence of the orchestra's capacity,

created by Wagner and still heightened by Richard Strauss, to describe pictorially and—so they say —psychologically. The subjugation of the human voice is thus hastened. Strauss himself does something to arrest the ruin, but fails to influence the inevitable trend of operatic composition. And the domineering producer continues to appeal overmuch to the eye.

So opera is ready for parody. Eroticism, in the conventional operatic sense, is no longer taken seriously. The desire to chase romanticism off the face of the earth must needs colour contemporary opera. Profound seriousness produces only the "Wozzeck" by Alban Berg, which in its breathlessness appears to be a work of art congenial to our time, but is in reality but the last consequence of "Tristan." Křenek, once an obstinate defender of atonality and linear counterpoint, discovers the charm of the human voice in his "Orpheus and Eurydice" and wields it still more in his jazz opera, "Johnny spielt auf," a sensational epitome and reflexion of all that is topical. But in vain: the afterglow of romanticism, which still remains here, is defied by the whole recent operatic output. Grotesque opera clearly shows the composer's critical attitude towards the stage.

As if to drive the paradox to its last conclusion, the film has invaded opera and is asked to help it. There is some natural relation between opera and film ; only opera, festively disposed by origin, cannot at once see an ally in the screen, which reckons with workaday curiosity. For just at the time when opera rejects ingenuousness, the film mops it up eagerly. The machine becomes mightier than the human work which still tries to uphold itself on the musical stage. The film, as it is to-day, cannot yet make the most of the human voice. But why should not the "talkie" exhaust its possibilities in this direction ?

One still hears the hope expressed that the wireless, which has offered opera its alliance, will lead thousands of new hearers to its confederate. Nothing could awaken a greater desire for an immediate, living impression than the hearing of beautiful, expressive and powerful operatic voices without a sight of the singers' personality and gesture.

The machine is hard and cruel : it will tolerate and propagate human efforts in opera only in the form of the very highest achievements. It is too soon to predict what will happen ; but there can be no doubt that the world's opera and the operatic world await new surprises and disappointments.

XII—BETWEEN CHAOS AND MACHINE

SLOGANS are running a furious race.

The world chaos produced by the war created a world chaos in music. A master like Arnold Schönberg might work himself up to solitary heights, but all round him raged a craze for destruction. Atonality and linear counterpoint were the two most current catchwords. Those who " also ran " in the chase after innovation found atonality very useful. It was pure negation—the confirmation of the irrelevant. Everything else was explained by expressionism, with which the painters indulged in an equally unrestrained orgy under cover of a common label.

Into this movement the West intruded with jazz and with Stravinsky. Although the two are not to be estimated by the same measure and Stravinsky very soon cut himself adrift from jazz, their connexion is of the utmost significance. It made the craving for revolt and destruction and renewal appear, so to speak, legitimated. Music was stripped of its divine attributes, its pathos scorned, its hidden meaning denied and its great forms were discountenanced as vehicles

for profound thought. Life, the human body, the legs became the measure of all things. Gaiety became overwhelming. Melody being distorted by a twisted line and the opposition of unrelated keys, the rank of the instruments being reversed, dissonance being interpreted as consonance, something new appeared which may well become fruitful for the art of music. Stravinsky himself, always capable of confronting us with a startling new synthesis, with some work that is a model of its kind, kept this promise in his "Soldier's Tale," which as burlesque stage music goes to the verge of the lyrical. None of his work influenced by jazz has anything like the same value.

For half a decade jazz was expected to be music's entire salvation. Here at last was something that powerfully set itself against all that was artificial, expressionist or everlastingly experimental. The universally comprehensible, primitive, not to say barbarous quality of jazz seemed to promise deliverance to an art that had become stagnant and was at the same time threatened by a spirit of destruction. Here was something that could boldly confront the film. In France, a country not naturally given to problems, into which Stravinsky fitted as a

matter of course, jazz easily consorted with art-music for a few years. America had founded a branch establishment in Paris. Real negroes did their best in revues, cabarets, variety theatres and bars to keep alive the jazz tradition—if there be such a thing. Life was gay, and so was art. Even the sonata acquired gaiety. The ballet became winged by jazz. All the young musicians —Milhaud, Poulenc, Jean Wiéner, Honegger— sought amelioration for their art by loans from jazz.

In Germany, a few years later, jazz was acclaimed with enthusiasm; but what seemed natural beyond the Rhine, was here a little too deliberate. Gaiety had to break through a bulwark of profundity in German musicians. Such people as Hindemith and Křenek gladly took up and utilized jazz, not without making some effect with it. Once arrived in Germany, jazz settled there with especial tenacity. The wails and lamentations of many serious musicians were answered by the rapture of the young generation, which went much farther than that of any other country in its hopes of the fertilizing power of jazz. When, after the appearance of many genuine jazz bands in German variety theatres, the jazz king Paul Whiteman arrived, he had

what must have been his greatest success outside America. Not only was the virtuosity of his players on the saxophone, on the banjo, on percussion instruments and, not least, on the piano praised; George Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue" seemed to confirm the value of jazz as used in symphonic concert music. All the same, an insipid taste began to be noticed in the saccharine melodies, and a rather unfortunate relationship of even so exalted a jazz band to trash. Is Paul Whiteman still a man of to-day, or has he already begun to be swallowed up by the very topicality he created for himself? The Americans themselves seem to have lost some of the rapture with which they once acclaimed him in the Æolian Hall in New York. This capitalist of jazz, who had the ambition to raise and enrich and deepen art-music, comes to grief through the insufficiency of his own personality and of the ways and means of his speciality.

Jazz marks the triumph of the world citizen's impersonality. Paul Bernhard tells us in his attractive book on jazz of its mechanical fabrication in America, which he compares to that of boots or motor-cars. It is true that what goes on in Tin Pan Alley, the New York headquarters of the jazz industry, is the merest travesty of

what we understand by inspiration. Nothing could be more amusing, and at the same time disenchanting, than to read how "songs" are manufactured according to working hours, how their material, taken from all sorts of well-known sources, is worked up rhythmically, contrapuntally and instrumentally by various specialists, and how they are afterwards dispatched to the music-halls and trumpeted out into the world by propagandists. However, we hardly require to be told about the factory production of these hits, for we recognize it in its fruits. Jazz as a type remains a glorification of a mechanical and highly organized traffic, the manifestations of which denote the dethronement of personality, the extinction of individuality and the derision of imagination.

In spite of all this, Bernhard indulges in extravagant hopes in the fertilizing influence of jazz; but they are denied even by the greater part of those who acknowledged jazz as the means of healing and redeeming art-music. The young Frenchmen have proved disloyal to it. In America itself, musicians like Louis Gruenberg, who wrote the "Daniel Jazz," or Deems Taylor or Aaron Copland may find a happy mean of entertainment between jazz and art; but on

the whole Americans no longer expect salvation from jazz, which has become simply a vast machine. They gainsay Bernhard, who thinks of a fifteenfold or twentyfold multiplication of the small jazz band, with its soprano, alto and tenor saxophones, its wood and brass wind instruments, its suppressed strings, its banjo, piano, accordion, bandonion and its combination of percussion, and who dreams of a new, colourful and glowing symphonic music. For the true enrichment of music does not lie with its means, nor with the manner of its preparation, but with its substance, a progressive weakening of which has never been more evident to the ear than it is in jazz. We may appreciate jazzy gaiety, so long as it is infused into us by the few good specimens of the kind; we may occasionally rejoice that dancing, which has become a sport, shows a tendency to turn back to its original nature; but we cannot help feeling that we are visited by a veritable jazz pestilence in our democratic age, and becoming aware of the methodical extermination of fancy by the machine-like repetition of mechanically produced hits with their rhythmically clamped melodies, which of course are not offered us without "every modern convenience." There are, it must be

said, as an agreeable remainder of jazz, not only a new optimism that can never do any harm, but also higher possibilities of a new tonal experience. It is remarkable, for instance, how Stravinsky, as the fertilizer of the chamber orchestra, who writes no part that does not sound well, throws a bridge between Bach's Brandenburg Concertos and the jazz noises of the present day in such a work as " Pulcinella."

The general intelligibility of jazz has led from chaos to machinery. While linear counterpoint, especially in Germany, is applied without regard for the resulting sound and Bach is erroneously appealed to as its defender, while yet it falls often enough both into the chaotic and into the mechanical, Stravinsky again and again enters a methodical contest against " emotion " with renewed means. He is in sympathy with those who disclaim expressive representation, that romantic peculiarity of the nineteenth century. Parody and the grotesque, which are displayed in songs like the " Berceuses du Chat " as well as in instrumental works such as the striking little Suites, were violent anti-romantic measures bound to have an episodic, not to say negative effect in the end. We must have more positive achievements to ensure the creative artist's

command of the machine and afterwards to warrant exactitude in performance.

This may be brought about in two ways: the composer may write for a mechanical instrument, or he may influence the human performer of an instrument intellectually, but ask him to play purely mechanically. Stravinsky does both. But the decisive thing happens when he turns to the instrument which ever lent itself most willingly to the mechanical—the piano. None can rival it in dryness of delivery. Take away the pedal and the *legato* style, and it becomes the most convincing vehicle for the unemotional, as Stravinsky demonstrates in a piano Concerto, a Sonata and a Serenade. Those who have admired the purposeful use of dynamics as against feeling in "Le Sacre du Printemps," in spite of the lowering of the effect caused by excessive repetition of the motifs, will be inclined to regard this short episode in Stravinsky's career as an essentially fruitless interlude.

But even where the machine seemed least likely to do damage to creative work, as in the case of Schönberg, it begins to show its influence. After the reflexion of romantic sentimentality which even the whimsical "Pierrot Lunaire" still shows, after all the utterances of pessimism

expressed through his dramatic monologues, Schönberg is exhausted as a man of imagination, though he has progressed in constructive mastery. His mind, which is not beyond all that is sensuous, but consciously labours against it, has at last found the means of working on a large scale and to a new plan in the infinitely exchangeable twelve-tone scale. His work lacks nothing but the creative substance that should justify it. Only in some slow movements is it still to be detected.

The perfect gain of Schönberg's activity, which still proceeds in solitude and thus in circumstances very different from those of the majority of creative musicians, lies in the preference of chamber music by most composers. It is true that this is now somewhat exaggerated, partly thanks to the war, which caused much orchestral distress. The transparency of chamber music and the absence of all the extravagant luxuries of sound which had attacked music at the core, oblige the composer to be honest. But this again betrays any inborn weakness more quickly than was formerly the case—or rather, it would do so had we not got so far as to interpret weaknesses as an advantage, as evidence of strength and principle. A great part of this post-war

chamber music has lost its topical attraction—the only one it possessed ; it is the prey of oblivion or at best remains as a first step towards further evolution.

A tragic figure appears in Béla Bartók. Standing between Stravinsky and Schönberg, yet born and matured to the fullest independence, he is dragged out into the great world movement which consciously or unconsciously, easily or convulsively, progresses towards the mechanical. A musician of the greatest intelligence and integrity, who tries to make folksong fruitful for art-music, is here seen to be driven, after the Dance Suite that showed him at a cross-road, towards mechanical methods, not without an exotic admixture, by a lack of all that is sunny and luminous. The piano, to which his inclination chiefly attaches him, helps as usual to complete the artistic materialization.

The world is permeated by a dangerous bent to flirt with practically applied art, which makes ready use of substitutes. Only a few artists now set their aims somewhat higher. The catchword of the " new objectivity " circulates ; it is to be valid for all the arts and to lay especial stress on a supposed blood relationship between music and painting.

If this term has any meaning in music at all, it can only indicate an effort to achieve absolute purity in the art and to secure its freedom from literary or other encumbrances. It should express the desire to produce immediate impressions by the most direct artistic means. What it does express is the principle of a reaction against romanticism, against any excess of feeling. Unfortunately, however, a catchword does not in itself confirm the value of the art it designates, and too much stress is laid on its axiomatic and negative character, particularly in Germany, where anything in the nature of a policy is probably taken much too seriously. When all is said, what we notice above all is the lack of human emotion, without which there can be no abundant imagination. No doubt it is salutary to take Bach or Mozart as a pattern of pure music, although the reaction against Beethoven, which became more virulent than ever on the occasion of the centenary of his death, can have but a symptomatic significance and scarcely any practical effect. But Bach as well as Mozart would probably have been astonished to find later musical generations setting them up as pure musicians and as model representatives of objectivity.

This inclination towards objective music,

which shows itself in a predilection for the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, has had at least this success, that counterpoint, in the work of young German composers, becomes an observance and even a substitute for other qualities. But while pedantry thus becomes up-to-date, the pursuit of the new objectivity yet induces a mechanical production of music over and over again. Where rhythm is the life-giving force, such music may be interesting in patches; but the new melody which composers pretend to seek refuses to present itself.

Thus it can come about that, next to numerous apostles of barrenness, an extremely versatile and quick-witted exploiter of all that promises to come into fashion—Alfredo Casella—rises to eminence, becomes even the head of a school and also plays a prominent part as composer in an organization which he directs to his advantage as pianist, conductor and author. He is without doubt a more cultivated musician than most: with the keenest insight into the past as well as the present he wrote a work like the "Partita" which, effectively garnished with makeshift originality recalling the music from Scarlatti to Stravinsky, makes its successful way through the world's concert rooms.

This is by no means intolerable and does not offend against good taste. But music that claims detachment after the manner of the new objectivity often proves noisy and absurd to the point of childishness. One cannot help thinking of George Antheil's productions in this connexion, small as their prospect is of creating a following. To these must be added the compositions which proceed only by dynamics and rhythm, without any musical substance. Aridity and noise here show themselves related.

We have thus entered the realm of the musical machine which sways the thought of a number of musicians. It has arrived, and we must make up our minds to make the best of it. Men like H. H. Stuckenschmidt regard it as the composer's deliverance from all the evils of performance brought about by the executive musician, including even the conductor, and as likely to realize new artistic possibilities. A creative artist of the importance of Paul Hindemith, too, sees great promise in the composer's cutting a certain type of music into a pianola roll. This is music as an article of utility. Music for the film, Hindemith suggests, should be reproduced without the aid of human performance, by mechanical pianos or mechanical organs.

This is by no means irrational. But when creative people fix extravagant hopes on mechanical toys because they fancy that, by themselves cutting the rolls, they can safeguard their work from the executant's caprice, they are obviously under a misapprehension. Nobody denies that a musical apparatus may achieve certain combinations beyond the reach of any player or number of players; but in the first place the mechanism must remain cold because the composer's fancy deliberately excludes the performer, and secondly the hearer remains untouched precisely because the player is not personally concerned in the reproduction. For it is on his appearance and his expression that a living echo of the composer's thought largely depends. If the new objectivity is really to be upheld by such soulless music, then its defeat is assured. It is significant that such an idea should ever assert itself at all.

A survey shows us that, for all the tags and slogans which are abroad, there is unprecedented agreement among the world citizens. Its far-reaching effect is not difficult to understand, for the traffic, even where it assumes a musical festival character, tends to balance the general outlook. There are shades of opinion and broad

distinctions between the different races, but atonality, polytonality, linear counterpoint, primitiveness, new objectivity and what not do their utmost or their worst everywhere. The preoccupation with problems becomes more acute the nearer we approach from the west towards the centre of Europe.

Beethoven, now much abused, once proclaimed the artist's liberty and enforced it in his life and work. The new traffic, by mechanizing art, has on the whole enslaved creative man. The world's music wavers between chaos and machinery.

XIII—FROM THE MACHINE TO HUMANITY

THE discouragement which lays hold of the observer is mitigated, however, by several signs of a reaction against the machine, of something approaching a "new humanity."

We shall have long to wait for the birth of a new man. He would have to be the child of pure democracy, but that itself can scarcely mature anywhere, for its development is hindered by all manner of difficulties, not the least of which are economic. If it is making for the United States of Europe, we shall, from the artistic point of view, have to reckon with the all but total obliteration of a distinctive artistic development according to landscapes and races, which is already much weakened to-day and would become more so by such a political union, however loose. What would take its place we cannot tell. But the progress towards a new man will not at first be traced by art, though it would certainly in the end produce an artistic advance.

Music in its highest forms is inseparable from a leaning towards the metaphysical, not to say

the mystical. All religious feeling, undermined by present trends of thought, tends to convert itself into art. Perhaps it is just that yearning for music discerned in the minority of the finest people, which shows how strongly a metaphysical need converted into an æsthetic desire manifests itself. Our future depends upon the few who turn away from or against the masses.

It was German music above all which stilled the metaphysical craving. But if we regard it as its greatest achievement to have unceasingly striven towards transcendental heights and to have expressed the metaphysical emotionally by means of the great forms of instrumental music, it cannot be denied that it is precisely this which led to the present dehumanized state of our art. No linear counterpoint, or whatever else may be dogmatically recommended as a universal remedy, can save us from this. Tinkering and experimenting were encouraged by the ready pliability of instruments which gradually robbed music of its true nature and led to its mechanization. The influence of the mind, of ideas and of speculations about the beyond once had incalculable effects on the formation of musical materials. The more immediate the relation between man and instrument, the

greater becomes the desire to use it arbitrarily. The piano already caused musical revolutions. The orchestral wealth of colour, combined with an unlimited harmonic evolution, does the rest in urging music onward and wearing out its material. Melody, bound fast to harmony and rhythm, has its functions limited to the utmost. Linear counterpoint tries to reverse the process, but cannot arrest the wear and tear. Music which relies only on dynamics and rhythm has succumbed to machinery. Mechanization came about because the metaphysical need, which had at first turned all that is sensuous to its own account, afterwards misused it by a progressive and one-sided intellectual application.

It may be tempting to increase the material of sound by smaller divisions of the tempered scale, by third-tones as Busoni imagined them or by the quarter-tones actually introduced into musical practice by Alois Haba. But this brings about no essential enrichment and only succeeds in widening the gulf between vocal and instrumental music. Moreover, but few people's ears are able and ready to distinguish clearly between small differences in the frequency of vibrations. Also, players of string instruments, and especially violinists, will complain that these smaller

divisions limit their scope to the point of breathlessness and rob them of the soaring, disembodied, touching *vibrato*.

There is an endeavour to let the machine become a higher organism by the aid of humanity. The spherophone by Jörg Magers tries to deliver music from the thraldom of instruments, and so leads it into a domain without limit. More than that, an apparatus invented by the Russian Theremin, which exploits the high frequency of electro-magnetic currents in the interests of music, achieves the miracle of a reproduction of melodic lines by a simple movement of the hands in space. We marvel at the phenomenon, and yet hesitate to share the sanguine expectations of a future music that claims to be wholly free because wholly detached from instruments. What is certain is that man does his best here to incorporate the machine in himself. The future entirely depends on the extent to which he will rise above the mechanical.

The human voice as expression of sensuous man is not to be repressed. It led to a species of German music that conquered the world—German song. But what Schubert imagined for the human voice was at last fated to go the way of instrumental music. It came into the

clutches of programmatic romanticism and is now, in spite of Richard Strauss, who himself has too superficial a conception of melody, but a shadow of its former self.

The impetus of tension, introduced into the musical idiom by Wagner and crystallized in the suspension, certainly heightened the power of emotional expression in the human voice and let it share in metaphysical aspiration. But at the same time it began to undermine its effectiveness. Those who turn from Wagner and those who revolt against him, those who, often strongly biased, pretend to stand for the new objectivity, are once again essentially given to instrumental media of sound. The voice, subordinated to the linear system, is not only degraded, but deprived of its soul and unnerved.

Needless to say, the voice presented its obstacles to this rapid advance of instrumental music. Bound to the human body and subject to its hazards, closely related to sex, it was ever with difficulty conquered by the things of the spirit and the other world. A Johann Sebastian Bach succeeded in subjecting it to the fundamental idea of his music, and so forced it into the path of instrumental music. What came after, what actually takes place before our eyes and ears,

shows a natural atrophy of the vocal organ, so far as sensuous beauty goes.

The reconciliation of instrumental and vocal music, of the metaphysical and the physical, on a new plane is a task for the future. How far it will succeed depends on the wear and tear of the art's materials. The question, then, is this: Is the material of music so worn out that no new possibilities are to be offered to singing humanity?

For that singing humanity is still with us, still clamorous. Folksongs, which once made it vocal, can no longer be invented. The treasures of folksong may be eagerly collected all over the world: this is but an aftermath of what once grew spontaneously and vigorously. The question is, therefore, whether a genius may save music, in spite of present artificialities, by the use of the human voice.

A number of figures in the world's music fortunately show that man, as a musician, defends himself against the machine. It would serve no purpose to attempt a classification according to nations and races where all are united by similar exertions. Only for the sake of outward order is each composer's nationality referred to in the paragraphs that follow.

Nevertheless, the keen-spirited Maurice Ravel must be praised as the strongest representative of the French tradition while he is pointed out as a master who will not give in to the modern traffic, but goes his way towards classicism independently and steadily. His compositions, especially his chamber music and in a smaller degree his orchestral works, show the conscience of a musician who is aware of the duty of artistic economy. That this economy, in spite of himself, also endangers the value of his music as such does not lessen his worth as an exemplary figure.

France also has Arthur Honegger and Albert Roussel, unalike in age and manner, but both opposed by nature to the bagatelle which is so much esteemed by their countrymen. Young Arthur Honegger, in his "King David," made what was probably his first attempt, not only to build a large structure, but to reconcile voices and instruments. No doubt he did not wholly succeed stylistically, but a new humanity is discernible in the work, and this is the more welcome in a composer who has toyed and played with pure dynamics too and paid his tribute to the machine, the steam engine. Albert Roussel, on the other hand, represents a new shade of impressionism, consolidated by formality.

Arnold Schönberg, Béla Bartók and Matthias Hauer may be named together as creative musicians who remain outside commercial organization. That they differ in their manner of production need not be pointed out. Schönberg and Bartók, who have both made eminent names in the world of music, for personal reasons broke faith with the essential nature of their art, as I have already stated. The twelve-tone theory of Hauer, an unpractical idealist, is still an almost untilled field the fertility of which cannot be predicted. His humanity alone is beyond doubt.

Uncommon heights and depths are reached by personalities like Alban Berg and Anton Webern, who are both disciples of Schönberg, but show clearly outlined individualities. They incline to a disembodiment of music, not without the influence of Debussy, yet along the line of "Tristan." Such art is hardly a proof of power; still, a man who, like Alban Berg, has produced a work of the calibre of "Wozzeck," has a claim on posterity.

That the Germans first became aware that a revival of musical competence must lead back to the voice is proved by the choral works which Křenek, Hindemith and the Austrian Felix Petyrek wrote almost simultaneously. The last,

who works in solitude, created a choral composition of the greatest actuality with his " Litanei," which speaks compellingly to us in a kind of breathlessness, a spiritual anguish put to music, and with a splendid variety of means. And two other composers are busy linking up vocal and instrumental music: young Kurt Thomas and the older Heinrich Kaminsky, who is pre-eminent in church music.

Paul Hindemith, it is understood, shows his desire to fill music with human significance by his productive use of old forms in a new spirit, in spite of his experimenting with this and that and his bestowal of superfluities upon the world. As a child of his age, he aims at giving the people what is the people's due. On the other hand, his adaptation of the *concertante* style to an opera like his " Cardillac " has not proved altogether successful, much as it honours the logical and cultivated creative musician in him.

The measured and yet inspired earnestness of Philipp Jarnach, who may be unreservedly called a master, will without doubt become exemplary.

The new humanity shows other triumphs in musicians so far apart as Zoltán Kodály in Hungary and the Swiss Jew Ernest Bloch, who is now settled in America. That folklore is

Kodály's sphere, in a broadly human sense, could not have been more convincingly shown than in his "Psalmus Hungaricus," and if in the works of Ernest Bloch European architecture is too obviously and detrimentally mingled with Hebraic melody, we are nevertheless moved by his creative humanity.

In Italy, next to Ottorino Resphighi, who has not his equal there as a symphonic stylist, but who also ministers to vulgar taste, there is Francesco Malipiero, who gives forth a weaker effusion of the Italian blood. In Spain Manuel de Falla succeeds in converting the Russian manner into agreeable and finely shaped music.

In England the Muse of Frederick Delius, the romantic impressionist, is silenced and that of the nationally inclined Edward Elgar is but rarely heard. Gustav Holst, on the other hand, advances with works that often mediate between voices and instruments.

It is easily comprehensible that in Russia itself Russian music, with Miaskovsky as its chief representative, does not make great strides. Outside Soviet Russia the composer who is busiest spreading a Europeanized Russianism is Serge Prokofiev, who made his name most readily with his opera, "The Love of the Three Oranges,"

but was enticed into the superficial by his facility and continues to cut his capers in high-spirited youthfulness. His third piano Concerto and his violin Concerto have been absorbed by the artistic traffic of the day as excellent music of general utility. The Pole Karol Szymanowski remains a keen-eared collector of current musical coin.

For the moment it is Igor Stravinsky who has said the last, most decisive and promising word. Although we may be well aware of his artistic, human and intellectual limitations, we cannot but admit that nobody has understood the requirements of our time better than he, or has given us a more complete synthesis of his personal disposition and of a truly new objectivity. His "Œdipus Rex" reveals an irresistible urge to create something genuine and essential, a work calculated to become common property. This rugged and concise opera-oratorio endeavours to express itself for all eternity and to link up antiquity with modern life. An ancient, classical, statuesque style becomes amalgamated with the austerity of the Russian church and yet tries to retain its own essence, while some note of the Requiem is also sounded in it. We may be offended by certain turns of phrase based on the common chord and by the frequent recurrence

of diminished sevenths; but all this becomes submerged by a logically maintained fundamental colour. Here is an equality between voices and orchestra such as would be hard to discover elsewhere. The orchestra is reticent, but unquestionably expressive; the voice parts have a melodic power and an acrid sweetness that shows no trace of indecision.

We place our faith in such figures, such men who in hard times make their way towards a new fulfilment. However threatening the doom of progressive material wear and tear may seem, the enterprise of such people is not to be held up. Even in the midst of the traffic it can assert itself, though it progresses more safely outside it.

The most serious obstacle, an unheard-of phenomenon, in fact, such as no other period of musical evolution ever knew, is the machine, which tries to dispossess the human musician. Whether, and how, the two will come to terms and whether a new humanity will be musically creative or active in some other way defies prophecy.

Meanwhile technical revolutions continue, and man changes with them. We know of a divine music that is no longer and are enwrapped in a twilight of the gods of music. But we hope for the genius who will conquer the machine.

XIV—IRREPRESSIBLE ROMANTICISM AND THE LATEST MUSICIAN

WE cannot help feeling that the non-romantic, which after all is but a negation, inspires a certain fear in the latest musician. Among the auguries and miracles we are still witnessing, the return of romanticism among so many technical achievements is conspicuous. For in the end even the airman, that model of matter-of-factness, will be inclined to call his adventurous desire to fly across continents romantic, though we must not take this too seriously.

Just as insolence is often but the mask of shyness, it may also be due to fear of sentimentality. All that is primitive and grotesque in the art of to-day makes us experience what is probably the most violent iconoclasm the world has ever seen. The new musician, considered as a type, seems to jumble together all the species of his art with an unheard-of callousness, to set the bar and the cabaret, the music-hall and the revue in motion against "pernicious emotion," to be intent above all on dragging melody into the gutter, and to shout down all that is noble with

the jazz song. But while he behaves in this supposedly American fashion, and often does it with great talent, he only too obviously tries to silence voices which become increasingly audible and claim his attention more and more urgently. Because he thinks ahead of the most recent music, he comes to realize that some essential factor has been stifled in his work. He begins to feel a desire for that tranquillity in which alone lyricism can thrive. How is it to thrive to-day, how is a new lyricism to grow in a world filled with so much noise? And yet, all that holds any promise of permanence in music and in the whole of art depends on that growth.

The latest musician is still under the influence of the pose, which is the consequence of his being ashamed of these emotional processes and due also to his anxiety not to confess his dawning awareness of the merely transitory value of musical trifles. The fact that the pose can assert itself so strongly and successfully proves that our time is not yet ripe for a new lyricism. And who will guarantee that, when its hour comes, composers will be equal to the task of bearing it, seeing that circumstances and the wear and tear of sound oppose it so powerfully? For

the nightmare of the machine is ever present, and though poets hope that it may give wings to their fancy, musicians cannot help watching it with alarm, if only because the reproductive side of their art plays so large a part in it.

In order to realize the force of the pose in contemporary music, let us look at the composer Ernst Křenek from that point of view. Born in 1900 and already burdened with a considerable number of productions which have been designated as "works," he was a boy at the outbreak of the war. He grew up in an entirely artificial, repressed and corrupt world. Deprived of any wide view and of experience, yet uncommonly clearsighted and earnest, he studied under Franz Schreker and eagerly pursued his avocation of composing, ever ready to turn into side-tracks. His work was not induced by any joy in music-making, not, as his descent might have led one to expect, by Austrian musicianship, nor by any zest in life, but depended on problems which were not even based upon sound reason, but hung in the air. All the catchwords became consolidated in it, the more so because he was from childhood trained to think contrapuntally. The rapidity of his polyphonic writing, bred by routine,

could not have been exceeded, but it naturally lowered the value of his output, more especially because what he wrote did not correspond to any experience of musical sound; it was, in fact, often directly opposed to it. Chamber music, symphonies and instrumental concertos of his are now allowed to sink into oblivion as more or less successful essays. The socialist creed of his time led him, who is himself confined in a stronghold, to give a one-act dramatic work of that name ("Zwingburg") to the world. The teaching of Franz Schreker is no more than a memory.

This over-ripeness in Křenek, who has never been truly young, never childlike, is to be explained, then, by a combination of deliberation and routine. Pose seems to have become second nature to him. Now that he has turned wholly to opera, he appears to throw it off by degrees; but here again, as in purely instrumental music, that true domain of the new objectivity, theories and schemes precede achievement, though the latter, necessarily and fortunately, modifies them and we are made to witness personal confessions where the true and the false still remain mingled. What is perfectly genuine is love of success, and of that

a composer so spoilt by first performances receives an ample share.

Success does not come to him so much through works written with the ambition to produce something of value, such as "Orpheus and Eurydice," where for the first time we find the germs of a new lyricism, as through "Johnny spielt auf," the first jazz opera, which has already been mentioned here as a reflexion of all that is topical. That a man like Křenek could not pass jazz by, but on the contrary saw in it an arena for the display of his high spirits, is not difficult to understand. What is remarkable, however, when all is said, is the certainty with which he subordinates it to his recent music, which becomes gradually free from pretence. Křenek looks to Paris, to Stravinsky, to anything that is worldly. He desires to make up quickly for whatever life has withheld from him. He gets to his goal by short cuts. I have said that the new musician no longer takes eroticism seriously, that he even parodies it. But Křenek tackles it. Erotic experience, it is true, cannot have strongly influenced a musician so keenly intellectual by nature. Even the works which go back almost to his years of puberty cannot well be regarded as emanations of the instincts. Eroticism never-

theless left its traces on him. Křenek feels the need to transmute it artistically in some way, not so much emotionally, although there is no lack of powerful love scenes in "Orpheus," but rather in the Strindbergian manner, according to the dictates of the overwrought librettist Kokoschka, who delights in obscurities, and especially, as in "Johnny," cynically. The cynicism with which he drives woman from romance into frivolous adventure is significant of the thoughtless manner in which an essentially cold nature dismisses things of that sort. And since both, romance and adventure, lend themselves equally well to musical treatment, it is not very easy to decide where sincerity begins and ends.

One cannot fail to recognize, however, that the germ of a new romanticism begins to show itself here, that a kind of yearning is noticeable in Křenek, especially when he composes songs.

What is still to happen in this direction remains to be seen. Just now it was a question of determining the type of the latest musician, and although a man like Paul Hindemith, with his spontaneous gifts and honest endeavours, may be of much greater value, at any rate for Germany, I could cite no better witness to testify

to the newly awakening romantic leanings than Křenek. But these become noticeable among the young Frenchmen also. Darius Milhaud, for instance, has already done with his jazzy past and entered other fields.

If Stravinsky, who was never a stranger to pose, in his busy self-confidence will acknowledge nobody but Tchaikovsky to-day, we find this to be at any rate an utterance of suppressed feelings. A new humanity, indeed, begins to warm his work after a period of dryness.

But since, as we have no difficulty in finding, a new romanticism has not yet established itself, people turn their gaze again upon the outcasts of the nineteenth century, to the exclusion of Wagner, however. The eternal recurrence of things dictates that, after the violent reaction against the romantics which brought the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries into fashion, a new counter-current should carry us back to them again. If that should result in the discovery that Schumann, who was dismissed as an honest burgher of music, is the true genius rather than the comprehensive but artificial Wagner, even that adjustment of æsthetic valuation would not be surprising. For Schumann, after all, secretly bore fruit all over Europe without the loud

propaganda with which Wagnerism forced itself upon the world. At least there is no need to prove that, as Wagner asserted the Germanic in music outwardly, so Schumann did it inwardly.

Without attaching any great creative significance to a return to the earlier romanticism, the observer cannot fail to note it; but if it comes into vogue again, that must mean that a common feeling for it exists. From this it would follow that no amount of machinery can produce a fundamental change in human nature and that even the rise of a new form of home music is not impossible.

The machine, being the work of human beings, must in the end exhaust itself as a world power, while man with his longings remains. By relieving him from all that is mechanical, the perfected machine will unreservedly solve all its problems and thus leave man freer to serve art, which demands his independence of all material things.

He will then again be able to listen to the voices of nature and be made receptive for lyricism by their tranquillity. Nature's stillness will stir and fertilize his imagination, against which the noises of modern life had conspired.

Thus the rapid and uncontested victory of the machine might lead back to a romantic

yearning for secrecy, as it has already led to a craving for notoriety. And perhaps this will happen first of all in America, the paradise of perfected machinery.

Let the reader be cheated of no possible consolation.

XV—THE CRITIC'S DUTY

THIS romantic interlude, which was only to be expected, cannot, of course, affect the fundamental fact of the machine's profound influence upon man. And it is certain that this fact manifests itself also in the present state of musical criticism.

The musico-æsthetic confusion of our days could not possibly be exceeded. One might almost describe the æsthetics of music as cutting grotesque capers. The fault lies in no small degree with the shortsightedness of the average daily journalism, which often assumes an attitude towards a work it is asked to judge that is alleged to be favourable, but in reality does a good deal of harm.

It has been often said that the failure of professional criticism to do justice to Wagner produced its greater readiness to appreciate new music. That is no doubt true ; but now that we no longer take this failure so seriously, it would be pleasant to be able to think that this is the only reason for the critic's recent change of attitude towards novelties. A feeling of benevolence for new creative efforts is by no means so

general now, though more widespread, than before. Censure is more sharply opposed to approval. Yet even approbation on principle of all progress would not of itself mean that criticism has improved.

On the contrary, it has grown worse. Here again the influence of machinery makes itself felt, so much so that we must deplore a considerable depression of the critical level.

It is not absolutely inevitable that the critic should lose his individuality through his conformance with the newspaper traffic on the one hand and with the outside world on the other. Whatever concessions may be exacted by the daily journalistic requirements, which have to reckon with an enormous amount of advertisement, those who surrender body and soul to the machine had in any case not much to lose.

Daily requirements demand of the music critic an habitual interest in every variety of musical performance. Where such labour is not enlivened by a constant renewal of extraordinary events, it is apt to become sheer slavery. And since each artist thinks himself the most important figure, criticism as a profession leads only too easily to a preposterous displacement, not to say distortion, of values.

But the newspaper machine is concerned with topical news, and the artist as well as his work is news too. It is in the nature of the modern press, and becomes its more urgent need year by year, to give prominence to as many artists and works as possible, no matter whether favourably or otherwise. Wires are pulled between the press and publishers and every sort of commercial enterprise has its connexions with every other, however divergent their interests may be.

This call for interesting news alone may drive a critic who wishes to be useful to his editor into activities which may be highly detrimental to his cause. The attention he gives to every event is doubtless laudable, but the benefit may become a plague where benevolence grows into indiscriminate enthusiasm, where fine phrases take the place of judgment, where the satisfaction of the everyday needs is at the same time that of personal vanity and, worse still, obscures the critic's view of the continuity of things and the main line of development. And all this without taking account of the influence on criticism of matters outside its sphere, which increases at an alarming rate these days.

For the sake of truth let it be said: the machine

exercises this sort of pressure on many a critic, and this again helps to set the machinery of public musical activity into an all too breathless motion.

A musical situation that is more critical than ever before may also endanger the majority of critics. To make matters worse, the critic's task is now more difficult and manifold than ever.

The desire for positive views exists as a matter of course in artistic people, and therefore in some critics. But for that very reason they never required a greater faculty of discrimination than to-day.

The average music critic may feel that the decline of concerts will eventually make him superfluous. If it does, he must be superfluous already. The critic who has learnt to grasp the present situation, who is aware of man's struggle against the machine and of the necessity to support all that is capable of a direct appeal, will find his duties outlined for him in the most natural way. He will first of all try to uphold crumbling institutions in such a manner that they may still prove productive, and secondly he will carefully watch those which are being newly formed and collaborate

with them in turning their artistic possibilities to account.

But it is important that, next to a general principle of affirmation, he should retain the courage to condemn. That alone can save us from the encroachment of the artistic refuse we see accumulating on every hand.

The recognition of the very important recent tendency towards directness cannot fail to show the critic, as it shows everyone else, the necessity of pressing his senses into the service of sound and form. Scores which give pleasure to the reader, but not to the hearer, mistake their aim, just as books do which fail to breathe the vitality of the spoken word. The ear demands the utmost immediacy of impression.

The critic, whose knowledge of musical science may be taken for granted, must nevertheless realize, for all his appreciation of what musicology has done, how many superfluous products of it are still printed year in, year out. He must feel more clearly than ever that past periods of evolution shrink before the present. Music produced before Bach may have ever so strong a vogue: he will tell himself that this too will pass.

Not to succumb in the battle against the

machine, not to become himself a machine, nay, to dominate it—that should be his aim to-day.

The critic cannot hold up the course of things, this world being ruled by the inevitable; but let him point again and again to man, to life in art, to music that is divine because it is in its essence human.

Music come to earth? I know all about that, and yet believe in a future.

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